ENGLISH COMPOSITION

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TORONTO

ENGLISH COMPOSITION

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PREFACE

One of the fundamental ideas on which this book is planned is that a purpose, not a rule, should guide a student to write well. He must not be made to feel that success in English Composition comes from avoiding something; he should not look forward to being praised just because he doesn't do things. Consequently, we have tried to emphasize a few large, positive, constructive principles and to minimize rules, particularly of the negative sort. Good sense in applying these principles is the means by which the student may succeed in carrying out his purpose. In order that he may not be obliged to subordinate his enthusiasm, his special interest, his intended effect to a rigorous technique, we have tried to make him realize that technique may be molded and modeled to suit his effect. Thus there is no abstract treatment of unity, coherence, and emphasis, and no abstract treatment of the whole composition. But there is specific discussion of the way a particular kind of composition making a particular appeal, whether expository, argumentative, descriptive, or narrative, will utilize the principles of Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis for its own peculiar purpose. In the case of description and narration, which are sometimes thought to succeed by mere vividness, the structural principles will be shown to produce a notable gain in effectiveness. Moreover, flexibility in paragraphs and sentences receives special attention. Since the interest of style depends so largely

upon the weaving of words into sentences, we have treated emphasis, variety, and rhythm with more than usual fullness and explicitness.

The pictures accompanying the descriptive extracts by Scott, Hawthorne, Ruskin, Blackmore, Stevenson, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Phillpotts, and others will, it is hoped, prove stimulating. By comparing pictures of actual scenes with descriptions of these scenes from the same point of view, students gain a lively sense of method and choice of words. Furthermore, in the treatment of setting in narration, the illustrations emphasize the skill with which authors have infused the atmosphere of place and country into their stories.

The arrangement of the book follows the order in which students do their work. First comes that part of the process of writing which takes place before any words are put on paper — namely, gathering and weighing of material: here special attention is given to the various preparatory steps — the use of books and periodicals for expository and argumentative material, the weighing and estimating of one authority against another, the use of libraries, catalogues, indexes, and the making of notes on books and lectures. Then follows the discussion of the principles which come into play in the particular form of composition which the writer decides to work in. The succeeding parts deal in turn with the structure of paragraphs and sentences, and the effective use of words. Assignments of reading and exercises, however, may be given in any order which suits a teacher's methods.

In the frequent references to *College Readings in English Prose*, edited by F. W. Scott and Jacob Zeitlin, that useful work is cited as *College Readings*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION: Why It Is Worth While to Study English Composition 1

PART I

GATHERING AND WEIGHING MATERIAL

CHAPTER I

THE SOURCES OF MATERIAL 7
THE USE OF LIBRARIES 7
The Catalogue 8
Books of Reference 8
SUGGESTIONS ON READING 8
WEIGHING AUTHORITIES 10
ON TAKING NOTES 11
ON BEING LOGICAL 13
ON BEING SPECIFIC 14
ON MAKING EXPERIMENTS SUCCEED 15
ON BEING ORIGINAL 17
WHY YOU MUST NOT COPY WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGMENT . . 17
ON ALERTNESS 18
Exercises 20

PART II

KINDS OF COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTION 26

CHAPTER II. EXPOSITION

PAGE

PURE EXPOSITION 28
Definition and Kinds 28
Choosing a Subject 28
Gathering Material 30
Considering the Reader 30
Outlining the Exposition 31
Unity 38
Coherence 38
Emphasis 39
Writing the Exposition 39
The Introduction 40
Securing Clearness 41
Maintaining Interest 43
Style and Manner 45
Exercises 46

CRITICISM 49
What Criticism Is 49
What to Write about 50
Considering the Reader 50
Subordinate Elements 51
The Author's Purpose 51
The Author's Success 53
Conclusion 56
Exercises 57

BIOGRAPHY 62
Definition and Kinds 62
Choosing a Subject 63
Sources of Information 65
Elements in Biography 66
Narrative 66
Descriptive 67
Analytical 67
Two Dangers to Avoid 72
Exercises 74

PAGE

Suggestions on Writing Reports and Theses . . . 75
Qualities of Style 75
Structure 76
Table of Contents 76
Paragraphs 76
Sentences 77
Technical Terms 77
Footnotes 77

CHAPTER III. ARGUMENT

Value of Argument 79
Conviction and Persuasion 80
Kinds of Argument 80
Evidence 81
Tests of Evidence 83
Argument from Authority 83
Collecting Evidence 84
Inductive and Deductive Reasoning 85
Fallacies 89
Begging the Question 89
Hasty Generalization 90
False Analogy 90
Mistaken Causal Relation 91
Planning the Argument: Formal and Informal . . 92
Phrasing the Proposition 92
Analysis 93
The Brief 97
Rules for Briefing 98
Writing the Argument 101
Persuasion 102
Methods of Persuasion 104
Informal Argument 108
Exercises 109

CHAPTER IV. DESCRIPTION

PAGE

Definition, Kinds, and Purposes 115
Material 116
Use All of Your Senses 117
Considering the Reader 118
Unity 119
Point of View 119
Dominant Tone 121
Coherence 123
Emphasis 135
Style 135
Be Objective 135
Figures of Speech 138
Expressive Verbs 139
Description by Effect 140
Sound and Meaning 140
Combination of Details 140
Brevity 141
Description in the Service of Narration 142
Exercises 145

CHAPTER V. NARRATION

Definition 149
Simple Narrative 150
Comparison of Dime Novels and Good Narrative . . . 150
Development of Situation 154
Motivation 155
Climax 156
Setting 156
Characters 157
Dialogue 157
Style 158

PAGE

Material 158
Experience 159
Reading 159
Imagination 161
Notebook 162
Plan 164
Limiting the Field 165
NARRATIVE WITH PLOT 166
Plot 166
Unity of Impression 167
The Fable 170
Point of View 170
Characters 174
Origin of Characters 174
Character Stories 177
Methods of Portraying Character 177
Choice of Names 177
Description 178
Exposition 180
Action 181
Dialogue 183
Dialect 186
Dialogue in Notebook 187
Setting 188
Coherence 197
Movement 199
Emphasis 199
Beginnings 199
Endings 201
Climax 202
Surprise 202
Titles 203
Exercises 204

PART III

STRUCTURE

CHAPTER VI. PARAGRAPHS

PAGE

Definition 209

Unity in Exposition and Argument 210

The Topic-Sentence 211

Unity in Description 215

Unity in Narration 217

Coherence in Exposition and Argument 220

Order 221

Parallel Constructions 226

Connectives 226

Transitions between Paragraphs 228

Coherence in Description 229

Coherence in Narration 229

Emphasis in Exposition and Argument 230

Emphasis in Description 232

Emphasis in Narration 233

Exercises 233

CHAPTER VII. SENTENCES

Unity 238

Unity of Thought 238

Unity of Expression 239

Unity in Description 240

Unity in Narration 241

Coherence 242

Order 242

Grammatical Form 243

Dangling Modifiers 243

Reference 244

Parallel Constructions 244

PAGE

Connectives 249
Coherence in Description and Narration 250

EMPHASIS 251
Length 251
Repetition 252
Subordination 252
Position 255
Inversion 256
Periodic Sentences 256
Climax 258
Balance 259
Emphasis in Description and Narrative 260

VARIETY 260
Vary the Length of Sentences 261
Don't Repeat Words Aimlessly 261
Don't Use Compound Sentences Continually . . . 261
Mingle Loose and Periodic Sentences 262
Don't Harness an Adjective with Every Noun . . . 262
Vary the Beginnings of Sentences 262

RHYTHM 263
The Rhythm of Prose 263
Parallel Structure 265
Rise and Fall 267
Magic Number Three 267
Polysyllabic Words 269
Rhythm in Synge's Works 271

Exercises 272

PART IV

DICTION

CHAPTER VIII. CHOICE OF WORDS

GOOD USE 286
Present 286

PAGE

National 287
Reputable 287
CLEARNESS 288
FORCE 288
Connotation 289
Vagueness 289
Exaggeration 290
Imitation Jewelry 291
Triteness 292
Figures of Speech 293
ELEGANCE 295

CHAPTER IX. IMPROPRIETIES

DEFINITION 298
A LIST OF COMMON IMPROPRIETIES 300

CHAPTER X. NUMBER OF WORDS

RULES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING STYLE CONCISE . . 313
Exercises (covering Chapters VIII, IX, and X) 317

PART V

MECHANICS

CHAPTER XI. GRAMMAR

VERBS: THEIR SUBJECTS AND OBJECTS 321
ARTICLES AND PRONOUNS 323
THE POSSESSIVE CASE 324
ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS 325
VERBS 326
CONFUSION BETWEEN PARTS OF SPEECH 330

CHAPTER XII. PUNCTUATION

PAGE

General Considerations 331
The Colon 332
The Semicolon 333
The Comma 334
The Apostrophe 337
The Dash 338
The Hyphen 338
Interrogation Marks 339
Punctuation of Titles 339
Punctuation of Quotations and of Conversation . . 339

CHAPTER XIII. SPELLING

Classes of Words often Misspelled 341
Words often Misspelled 347

CHAPTER XIV. PRONUNCIATION

General Considerations 351
Mispronunciation Classified 354
List of Words often Mispronounced 359

CHAPTER XV. ABBREVIATIONS, CAPITALS, FOOTNOTES, ETC.

Abbreviations 362
Capitals 363
Italics 364
Numbers 364
Footnotes and Bibliographies 365
Miscellaneous Directions 367
Exercises (covering Chapters XI–XV) 368

INDEX 375

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
The Vale of Widecombe	124
Chartres Cathedral	125
The Bay of Monterey	128
The Palace of Fine Arts	129
The Interior of Durham Cathedral	130
Edinburgh Castle	131
Egdon Heath	190
The Aged Highway across Egdon	191
The D'Urberville Window and Tomb	192
Wool-Bridge House	193
The Doone Valley	194
Heather-clad Hill on Egdon Heath	195

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WHY IT IS WORTH WHILE TO STUDY ENGLISH COMPOSITION

In going from school to college, we pass from a place where instruction is chiefly by recitation to a place where instruction is largely by lectures. It is important not to be misled by the liberty which this change brings with it. Instead of supposing that at last we have found a place where the professor does all the work, and rejoicing in the sense of security which comes when we know that we are not going to be forced to stand up and make a ridiculous exhibition, we must learn not merely to keep up our work without the daily spur of oral recitation, but also to take really good notes on lectures. Mere good intentions will not help us to do this. It is a knack, which college freshmen have hitherto had little if any chance to acquire.

Again, when we leave school for college, we go from a place where there are relatively few books, where the whole of a book is ordinarily used, and where books are, in a way, guaranteed, to a place where there are immense quantities of books, where parts of books rather than the whole are read, and where the notion of guaranteed books is quite at variance with the whole idea of the maturity and responsibility of the college student.

These are important differences, and they bring new and valuable lessons.

First of all, they necessitate learning to find one's way about the college library, to use the catalogue of it, and to go through the motions necessary to get books from the shelves. The time to learn these things about the library is the first month in college, for then it is no disgrace not to know things, and if they are learned then the help to the student's other work will be the greater.

Then, too, the fact that in college parts of many books are read instead of the whole of a few makes it necessary to learn, without reading the book through, whether it contains important material. Particularly for people who are in a hurry, the preface, the table of contents, and the index are of the utmost value. Practice in using these will mean a gain in speed and accuracy which will react helpfully in various directions.

But this is not the most difficult thing to be learned about books at college. Heretofore there has been little occasion to ask what to do when books disagree, and in consequence one has come to suppose that "if the book says so, it must be true." Instead of that notion one must, before the words "higher education" can mean anything in his particular case, learn to read "not to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider." To learn that is a task broader than any single course. Yet the place of the course in English composition is a very important one in this regard, for in it much can be done to teach how to weigh evidence, how to decide in advance which of two books is probably the more reliable, and how to judge between conflicting statements. This information is a priceless possession, not merely for a college undergraduate, but for a business man, a voter, or a reader of newspaper editorials.

Again, the fact that college composition is greater in amount and is on the whole done in larger units than school composition, necessitates learning two more lessons, in which it is the special function of teachers of English composition to help, though the benefits of those lessons are not wholly or even chiefly to appear in the work done for the Department of English. These two lessons are: first, learning not merely to write well, but to write well rapidly; and, secondly, learning not merely to write respectable short compositions in which the structure is simple and obvious, but also to plan and to sustain compositions of a hundred pages or more which shall not only be satisfactory in point of knowledge, but which shall be so carefully mapped out and so well supplied with guide posts that the reader has no excuse for losing his way.

Specifically applied to English composition, all this means that the college student must work under a large and sensible definition of that subject. Though few if any would acknowledge that they suppose English composition to include only "that part of my written work which I do in order to satisfy the Department of English," many seem to have quietly adopted this definition as a working principle. Yet it is manifestly a luxury which no one in search of a real education can possibly afford, for it leaves out of account not only the larger number of opportunities for practicing English composition, but precisely those forms of composition by which we are most likely to be judged both in college and afterwards. For example, it leaves out of account all conversation, all letters, and all written work in courses other than English. If we regard some of our writing as English

composition and the rest as something else, we shall certainly injure both the naturalness of our work in English composition and the correctness of our other writing and our speech. Professor Palmer's words apply to every one of us: "If he is slovenly in his ninety-nine cases of talking, he can seldom pull himself up to strength and exactitude in the hundredth case of writing." Even if he does succeed in pulling himself up, the effort shows and the style at best is stiffly correct.

A few years ago a certain professor of English read an examination book in which the spelling and punctuation were so bad that the grade had to be extremely low. The result was a four-page letter from the writer of the examination book, protesting vigorously against the injustice that had been done him. But unfortunately the letter betrayed the same lapses in spelling and punctuation that had characterized the examination book, and so the professor felt obliged to reply that the letter helped to prove the case against the writer. The student was sure that he had been badly treated. His letter had been judged, he said, as if it were a theme. It was not a theme; it was merely a personal letter. His ability to write, he urged, was good, as had been proved in more than one course in English composition. To consider the letter as a piece of English composition, he seemed to think, was to break all rules of civilized warfare by firing upon a flag of truce. In every such case the reply is that if it is worth while to write well at all it is worth while to write well all the time.

What we have been saying really means that this word "course" must not be allowed to hypnotize us. With time parceled out as our days in college are, it is easy to

forget the relation of courses to each other and to the sum total of what we are trying to accomplish. From ten until eleven, perhaps, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday we go into a certain room in order to study English composition. It is easy to allow ourselves to think that our duty to English composition is fulfilled if during those three hours we attend to what is told us. But presently the bell rings; we go across the hall to another room; and soon find ourselves writing a paper in History or Economics. What are those papers? Surely not English composition, because English composition ended several moments ago. So we permit ourselves to spell and punctuate in our own way, and in general to ignore what has just been told us.

If this is a good way to master English composition, it ought to be a good way to master other things. How would it work in the case of a game like golf? Suppose that a young man really wishes to learn to play golf. He engages a professional, and for some time takes lessons, let us say on three mornings of every week. In return for the very considerable amount of his money — or his father's money — which he thus spends, the beginner receives certain very valuable advice. Let us suppose that, after attending to all of this teaching, our apprentice at golf forms the habit of going each afternoon to some distant golf course, and, safe from the eye of the professional, breaking every rule that he has learned during the morning. How many prizes will he win?

Part I

GATHERING AND WEIGHING MATERIAL

CHAPTER I

1. The Sources of Material. — The sources of what we write about are many and various. We read books, magazines, newspapers, and manuscript. We hear conversation, college lectures, public lectures, music, and all the sounds, significant and insignificant, lovely and unlovely, which help to make the world both vivid and confusing. We see people, nature, pictures, millions of things — some fixed, some flashing past us — their meaning sometimes lost in their number. As all of these experiences pass through our minds, many of them are forgotten and others are modified by our reason and our imagination. Thus we constantly make over our impressions, and wisely forget many of them.

2. The Use of Libraries. — A great deal of this material from without, however, is entitled to the most respectful attention, because it proceeds from those who, though they may now and then make mistakes, are on the whole wiser than ourselves. Such are the authors of the better books and other written materials which fill great libraries. This means that we must learn our way about the one or

two large libraries upon which we individually happen to depend. In these libraries we must learn to use

1. *The Catalogue.* — In all good libraries the catalogues are now arranged on cards, and the cards, in trays, are arranged alphabetically. Usually authors (like Holmes, Macaulay, and O. Henry) are put into the same catalogue with subjects (like Drama, Civil Service, and Boy Scouts).

2. *Books of Reference.* — No student can carry on the work of the Freshman year — to say nothing of later years — unless he can use indexes to periodicals, dictionaries of words, encyclopedias, dictionaries of biography, year books, atlases, special bibliographies, and other kinds of reference books.[1] He should learn the location of each of these groups of books in his own library, should discover the way to use each, and should practice using them to improve his speed and accuracy. For exercises in the use of books of reference, see page 24.

3. **Suggestions on Reading.** — *Selection.* — In school we read only a few books. We were told to read these, and so we did. It was to be presumed — at least we did

[1] Among these may be named: for **dictionaries**, Webster's *New International*, Murray's *New English* (Oxford) *Dictionary*, and the *Century;* for **biography**, the great English *Dictionary of National Biography.* Appleton's *Cyclopœdia of American Biography*, the *Century Cyclopedia of Names*, *Who's Who* (English), and *Who's Who in America;* for **encyclopedias**, the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopœdia Britannica;* for **bibliographies of periodical literature**, Poole's *Index to Periodical Literature* (running from 1802 to 1902), the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* (1900—), and the *Annual Magazine Subject Index* (1907—) which since 1909 has included *The Dramatic Index;* for **current facts**, the *Statesman's Year Book*, *Whitaker's Almanac*, the quarterly *Index to the New York Times* and the monthly *New York Times Current History.*

presume — that each was the best of its kind; at any rate, we read it and believed it all. In college, however, we are immediately introduced to large libraries. We are given alternatives. We select one book out of five, in it we perhaps read only a few chapters, and from that reading we try to remember only a few facts. This responsibility of selecting is a new responsibility, which we have acquired because we are no longer children in school, but men and women in college.

Tasting Books. — In his famous essay on "Studies" Lord Bacon observed that most books are not to be chewed and digested, but merely to be tasted. In tasting books remember to notice the sub-title, to read the preface and the table of contents, to use the index and the side headings and chapter analyses if there are any, to apply the principle of emphasis to the chapters and paragraphs, — that is, to glance at the points where the important statements ought to be, and to note every tabulated series, category, and the like.

In performing this highly important task of skimming books, we should remember not to be influenced by the annotations of previous readers. It is extremely hard to ignore a pencil mark in the margin of a book, especially if it is accompanied by a vivid comment from the hand of some enthusiastic reader. Neither must we suppose that the size of the book makes any difference: big books are not necessarily scholarly, nor small ones superficial. Nor is beauty of type and illustration a conclusive argument, though it undoubtedly increases our pleasure in the reading. Not even the author's style or the profuseness of his footnotes are a sure indication of his quality as a scholar.

4. Weighing Authorities. — What, then, does help us to judge between books? Though it is impossible to give numbered rules which will enable us infallibly to judge between dependable and undependable books, some help may be had by considering

1. *The Date.* — In science and other subjects in which knowledge is increasing very fast, recent books are better than the older ones. Remember, however, that what matters is the date when the book was written or when it was last revised by the author, rather than the date of the latest reprinting. Remember also that in some subjects the older book may be better than the newer one. If, for example, we wish to find out all that we can about Sir Walter Scott, we should certainly be making a mistake to ignore the work of his son-in-law, Lockhart, whose biography of Scott was published between 1836 and 1838.

2. *The Author.* — The date, after all, tells us comparatively little about the book; we must try to find out something about the author. What books has he previously written, and what have experts thought about them? What training has he had? What degrees has he received? What professional position does he hold, and to what learned societies does he belong?[1] Has he an international reputation?

3. *The Book Itself.* — It is the book itself, however, rather than anything that we can learn about the author or infer from the date of publication, that ought to influence us. We must be alert to notice the purpose of the book, as shown by the title-page and by the preface.

[1] These questions *Who's Who, Who's Who in America,* and other biographical dictionaries will help us to answer.

Does it aim to silence an opponent or to seek the truth? Has the author written his book in a hurry or has he been gathering his material and pondering it for many years? Has he read few books or many? Is he generous in what he says about those who have previously written on the subject or does he give you the impression that now for the first time an ignorant world is to be set right? Is he cautious in his use of evidence? Does he seem to be devoted to the subject or is he somewhat too intent upon the aim of making a personal reputation? [1]

These considerations amount to saying that every author is a witness, and that therefore his value as a witness depends upon his opportunity for observing the phenomena that he is writing about, upon the general intelligence and special knowledge which make him able or unable to interpret what he has observed, and upon the presence or absence of some motive or prejudice that would injure the truth of his account. It should particularly be remembered that expertness in one subject does not qualify a person to pronounce an opinion on a different subject. Indeed his expertness may positively injure his value as a witness, for it may tempt him to apply false analogies. For example, if he is a manufacturer writing about sociology, he may be tempted to consider men as if they were machines.

5. On Taking Notes. — Since note-taking is constantly useful in almost all college courses, it should be early mastered. Its principle is simple, — that, by attentive listening or reading, the student can condense into small space the gist of any lecture or book. The difficulty of

[1] With these questions in mind, examine *College Readings*, pp. 248–249 (E. L. Godkin, "Professor Huxley's Lectures").

the work will, of course, vary as the speaker or writer is or is not systematic. In any case, however, the student will readily perceive what is important, while close attention will reveal to him the plan of any well-constructed book or lecture. This plan, if he is making an abstract from a book, he can write down at his leisure; but if he is taking notes from a lecture he must keep pace with the speaker. His object should be to put on paper not only the outline but as many of the details as are necessary for complete understanding when read, say, some two or three months later. If the notes can be made clear to any reader, so much the better.

For the general practice of note-taking it is well to bear in mind the following suggestions:

The Matter. — Listen or read attentively to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials. Essentials are the facts or theories of the matter in hand. Non-essentials are introductory or transitional or illustrative passages, with all that goes to make for mere interest. It is clear that the essentials should be noted down, and that other matters should generally be rejected. Illustrations, which the beginner is inclined to write out in full, can usually be recalled by a mere reference.

For essentials and non-essentials, then, the practice is simple. But between the two lies a class of matter which will be more or less valuable to the note-taker according to his familiarity with the subject, or his ability to comprehend it at once. This class is explanatory matter, which students will use in different proportions. Good note-taking requires, nevertheless, that as much of this be preserved as will show the sequence and make all essentials clear.

The Form. — For the sake of accuracy, it is well to use as many as possible of the author's words, of course condensing wherever there is opportunity. It is, however, not always possible to use the author's phrasing, especially in taking notes from lectures, when there is need of haste. Skillful paraphrasing is then quite satisfactory.

If possible (that is, whenever the book or lecture is systematically planned) the notes should be put down in topical form, with headings and sub-headings, for such an arrangement aids in studying the subject. Further, the notes should be widely spaced, to give opportunity for corrections or additions. Notes will be the clearer if they are well indented and if important words and phrases are underlined.

Notes should convey complete statements, not necessarily in finished sentences, but so nearly complete that the meaning is plain. The beginner is too apt to suppose that a word will convey a statement as well as it will remind one of an illustration. The two are quite different. Simple abbreviations, not only in sentences but also in words, are recommended as making the work easier. They should, however, be clear to the instructor.

6. On Being Logical. — Apart from style, many of the grounds on which we prefer one book to another are nothing more than matters of logic. A traveler visits a few American cities and writes his impressions of America. An instructor reads the first two pages of a theme, finds them very badly written, and says to himself, "This is going to be a poor theme." Every one is subject to the temptation of judging the whole by a part. Yet to yield to this temptation is to commit one of the most serious of offenses against logic.

A similar error is that which so frequently appears in Macaulay's account of Johnson. Macaulay gives us the impression that whenever Johnson dined out the air was more or less filled with ladies' slippers and that Johnson always asked the waiter to bring him a Newfoundland dog instead of a napkin. Macaulay's error consists in so exaggerating a statement of what happened in a single case that it becomes the basis for the assertion that Johnson habitually did that thing. It will elsewhere be pointed out (see page 290) that the force of reserve is greater than the force of exaggeration. Let this become for you a matter not merely of the sparing use of adjectives in the superlative degree, but of the cautious use of evidence in all kinds of writing.

7. On Being Specific. — Most subjects as they occur to inexperienced writers are large enough for volumes: Capital and Labor, Immigration, College Athletics, Boys' Clubs, and The High Cost of Living are not subjects for six-page compositions, but for books. If they are to be made the subjects for six-page compositions, they must be strictly limited. Assume them to be titles for books, ask yourself what would be the chapter headings for your book, and then take one of those headings for your six-page theme. Practice breaking up subjects into their natural divisions. Take the history of the town in which you were born, for example. To do it thoroughly would require a volume. How would that volume be divided? "The Settlement," of course, would be one chapter. Where did the people come from who settled it? Why? Who were they? Then "The Early Days" would be a natural topic: the first church, the first school, and the other beginnings. So the story would come down, longer

or shorter according to the age of the town; but in any case too great a sweep of events to be spoiled by superficial treatment in one short paper.

But, you say, I do not presume to compete with mature scholars who write histories of towns or whole volumes on any subject. Why should not I, a mere beginner, take for my theme a subject for which an experienced historian would require a volume? The answer is that instead of being easier to write on a large subject it is much harder. You have not the requisite power to select and generalize. Do not try it: tell what your town did in the Civil War, or what happened when the railroad came through; but do not attempt the whole story.

8. **On Making Experiments Succeed.** — When I perform a series of experiments which seem to show that *A* causes *B*, I must be careful to eliminate the possibility that something other than *A* caused *B*. In the laboratory this is relatively easy: I can maintain approximately constant temperature, minimize disturbances from without, practically eliminate the possibility of unreliable weights and measures, and be pretty sure that the ten grains of salt used in Experiment *A* are precisely the same kind of stuff as the five grains used in Experiment *B*. But when I deal in human material the case is different. Suppose that, observing that a certain boy did well at a large college and that his brother did badly at a small college, I conclude that large colleges are preferable to small ones. Here I have virtually performed two experiments: in Experiment *A*, Student *C* attends College *D*, with good results; in Experiment *B*, Student *E* attends College *F*, with bad results. If, in these two experiments, all the

conditions except one had been exactly the same, I could pretty safely conclude that this one difference in the conditions caused the difference in results; but if two conditions are different, either may have caused the difference in results. This difficulty of *eliminating all the variables except one* arises in nearly all human questions. The difficulty can be met only by making the conditions of experiment as favorable as possible, by taking a great many cases into account, and by regarding the apparent result not as absolute proof, but as a probability.[1] Similar difficulties meet us when we deal with probable future occurrences. Should the United States own and operate railways? Shall we spend our next summer vacation at a certain lake in Maine? The scientific method would be, of course, to try it and see. But in many human questions failure would be so disastrous that we hardly dare to try it. What approach to proof can we make in such cases? We can seek for analogies. We can ask what the United States has operated that are most like railways, and perhaps find an analogy in the Post Office Department. And we can ask what countries that are most like the United States have operated railways. Or, in the other question, we can ask what people whose tastes approximate ours have successfully tried this lake in Maine, or what places most like this one we have successfully tried. In each case our effort is to reduce to a minimum the possibility of an error through unnoticed variations in the conditions of the experiment. If we do not regard these details very carefully, we shall, no matter

[1] To what extent does E. D. Durand observe these principles in his argument on "Council Government *vs.* Mayor Government" (*College Readings*, pp. 241 ff.)?

whether we are writing argument, biography, or exposition, fail to arrive at the truth.[1]

9. On Being Original. — To maintain one's originality in the face of the rows of books that confront one in a college library is a task that calls for real fortitude and activity. The matter is as important as any that we have to speak of in this book. Failure to read enough exposes one to the charge of being ignorant. Undue dependence upon the writing of others brings the still graver charge of unoriginality, if not of plagiarism. What is the proper course to take?

1. Either quote your author exactly, — that is, put quotation marks around what you have taken from him, no matter whether it is three words or a whole paragraph, and add a footnote explaining just what you have done, — or else keep so far away from what he has said that if his account and yours were arranged in parallel columns you would not feel ashamed of your lack of original ideas or words.

2. Do not try to remember words; try to remember ideas. Your reading has done you no good unless you can give the gist of it in your own words.

3. Unless you wish to copy, close all books before you begin to write your own version, and do not open them until you have finished. Then turn to them if you must to verify a date or the spelling of a proper name, but not for other suggestions.

10. Why You Must Not Copy Without Acknowledgment. — 1. Because when you write your name on the outside of the composition you thereby give your

[1] What analogies are used by Sir William Anson ("A Defence of the House of Lords," *College Readings*, 271 ff.)?

word that, except for acknowledgments expressed in it, the work is all yours.

2. Because you cannot learn to write except by writing. Copying is not writing.

3. Because to insert bits of another's work in your own almost always makes a ridiculous hodge-podge. The kind of student who copies another person's work is usually an inferior student. The person whom he copies is a mature writer. The result is that the reader, though he may not recognize the source of the borrowing, feels that the theme does not ring true.

4. Because you have been told not to.

Unless, therefore, you feel that it would be sensible and honorable to have another player impersonate you in an athletic contest, do not allow any one to impersonate you in a theme, or in any part of a theme.

11. Alertness toward Material Outside of Books.[1] — To be curious, intelligent, and imaginative through every moment of every day is the secret of success, if one wishes to write more than tolerably well. Our education comes, of course, not merely from books, not merely from those who are paid to teach us, but from every one who knows something that we do not know and from every sight and sound that is new to us in respect either to its appearance or its significance. Dr. Richard Cabot, in his remarkable book called *What Men Live By*, has this to say about the jewels of daily life:

> Perhaps I should here explain more concretely what I mean by the jewels of daily life. Here are some: the flash of a moving violin bow (as well as of the note it invokes), the shock of cool

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, 165 ff.

water on your heated face, a thrush note at dawn, a cadenza of swift laughter, the crash and foam of a breaking wave, the silver needle of a fife note, the rocket flight of a piccolo flute, all fireworks and brilliant lights in city streets, the light of speaking or laughing eyes, the first glimpse of an hepatica in spring with the white ends of its stamens shining against its deep purple cup like stars in a summer night, — all these brilliant points of delight have this in common that, like an electric spark, they set off trains of thought and action which of ourselves we are powerless to ignite.

Dr. Cabot has contrived, you see, to extract imaginative stimulus from experiences which are open to us all, but which our coarser senses and inferior interpretative powers have caused us to miss. By alert reading and resolute practice, every one can see more beauty and significance in his daily life; and he can enjoy one of the keenest of all pleasures, if he will insist upon going further and trying to fit words to what he sees.

If writing is any fun at all, why should we do it only when we are told to; and if it is not any fun at all, is that not partly because we are not working hard enough or intelligently enough at it? Whoever has had the pleasure of seeing the studio of a painter or sculptor has seen a room containing not merely finished pieces of work, but also a great many studies which probably will never be finished, — a head, a hand, a few lines set down because the artist could not rest until he had worked out some small point which he was quite content to put away by itself without asking whether it belonged in some larger design. To enjoy his work the student of writing must do the same; he must keep a notebook. He must

jot down in it suggestions for plots. The newspapers are full of them, and the anecdotes that he hears — often badly told — can be developed effectively. He must also set down names that would be good for fictitious characters, curious bits of dialect, and telling descriptive phrases. If he feels dubious about the good sense of this advice, let him turn to the well-known passages in which Benjamin Franklin and Robert Louis Stevenson tell how they learned to write, or let him read Nathaniel Hawthorne's notebooks and observe there the rough notes out of which so many admirable sketches and stories were worked up. (See § 103.) The trouble is not that there is nothing to write about, but that we are overwhelmed by many experiences out of which we are too lazy and unimaginative to disengage the few beautiful and significant ones.

EXERCISES

1. Bring in a list of three dictionaries, three encyclopedias, three dictionaries of biography, and three yearbooks. To each add a short note of your own, indicating the scope and value of the work.

2. Spend fifteen minutes in examining some book which you have not previously looked at, and then be prepared to discuss its purpose, arrangement, thoroughness, and fairness.

3. Collect ten references (books or magazine articles) on some subject suitable for a composition of a thousand words. Arrange the references properly and add a sentence of comment on each.

4. Write a one-page theme in which the topic-sentence and the conclusion shall be your own, but in which every statement of fact shall rest upon the authority of some one else. Refer specifically to each authority in a footnote.

5. In connection with the following problems for research, consider the necessary definitions, tests to be applied, sources of information, and errors to be avoided:

a. A writer wishes to discover whether students whose scholarship in college was high have or have not been more successful in after life than those of inferior scholarship.

b. A writer wishes to discover whether registration in college does or does not fluctuate according to the success of the college in athletics.

c. The person in charge of a large course in English composition wishes to learn whether his staff of assistants have or have not the same standard in marking compositions.

6. After having read the preceding chapter, comment on the following passages:

a. This book will fill an important blank in the history of the outbreak of the American Revolution. . . . No servant of the Crown ever received more slander, personal abuse, and misrepresentation than Thomas Hutchinson in Massachusetts, and yet his descendants have allowed a whole century to elapse without making an effort to defend his character.

b. The following impressions of America were written hurriedly as I traveled about from place to place. Never having more than two days in a city, I was obliged to make most of my notes on trains, and I beg the reader's indulgence if the style is at times hasty. I regret too that I have been able to visit only New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Washington. I may say, however, that while in these places I took every opportunity to make inquiries about the other parts of the country, and I hope the results will be found at least approximately truthful.

c. In preparing this volume I have carefully examined all the literature contemporary and posthumous relating to Mr. Webster. I have not gone beyond the printed material, of which there is a vast mass, much of it of no value, but which contains all and more than is needed to obtain a correct under-

standing of the man and of his public and private life. No one can pretend to write a life of Webster without following in large measure the narrative of events as given in the elaborate, careful, and scholarly biography which we owe to Mr. George T. Curtis. In many of my conclusions I have differed widely from those of Mr. Curtis, but I desire at the outset to acknowledge fully my obligations to him. I have sought information in all directions, and have obtained some fresh material, and, as I believe, have thrown a new light upon certain points, but this does not in the least diminish the debt which I owe to the ample biography of Mr. Curtis in regard to the details as well as the general outline of Mr. Webster's public and private life.

d. The names on the title-page stand as representative of the two nations whose final contest for the control of North America is the subject of the book.

A very large amount of unpublished material has been used in its preparation, consisting for the most part of documents copied from the archives and libraries of France and England, especially from the Archives de la Marine et des Colonies, the Archives de la Guerre, and the Archives Nationales at Paris, and the Public Record Office and the British Museum at London. The papers copied for the present work in France alone exceed six thousand folio pages of manuscript, additional and supplementary to the 'Paris Documents' procured for the State of New York under the agency of Mr. Brodhead. The copies made in England form ten volumes, besides many English documents consulted in the original manuscript. Great numbers of autograph letters, diaries, and other writings of persons engaged in the war have also been examined on this side of the Atlantic.

I owe to the kindness of the present Marquis de Montcalm the permission to copy all the letters written by his ancestor, General Montcalm, when in America, to members of his family in France. General Montcalm, from his first arrival in Canada to a few days before his death, also carried on an active corre-

spondence with one of his chief officers, Bourlamaque, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. These autograph letters are now preserved in a private collection. I have examined them, and obtained copies of the whole. They form an interesting complement to the official correspondence of the writer, and throw the most curious side-lights on the persons and events of the time.

Besides manuscripts, the printed matter in the form of books, pamphlets, contemporary newspapers, and other publications relating to the American part of the Seven Years' War, is varied and abundant; and I believe I may safely say that nothing in it of much consequence has escaped me. The liberality of some of the older States of the Union, especially New York and Pennsylvania, in printing the voluminous records of their colonial history, has saved me a deal of tedious labor.

The whole of this published and unpublished mass of evidence has been read and collated with extreme care, and more than common pains have been taken to secure accuracy of statement. The study of books and papers, however, could not alone answer the purpose. The plan of the work was formed in early youth; and though various causes have long delayed its execution, it has always been kept in view. Meanwhile, I have visited and examined every spot where events of any importance in connection with the contest took place, and I have observed with attention such scenes and persons as might help to illustrate those I meant to describe. In short, the subject has been studied as much from life and in the open air as at the library table.

7. Keep a Literary Diary for one week. Put down in it

a. Your reading and what you thought about it.

b. Your lectures and what you thought about them.

c. Any topics (suggested by reading, conversation, or observation) that would work up well into compositions, long or short, in verse or in prose.

d. Anything else that is to the point.

8. Exercises in the Use of Reference Books. — Answers should be clear and precise. At the end of each answer there should be a list of the books consulted. For the form of references, see § 318.

1. "Bobs." His career and titles.
2. What was the Ku-Klux-Klan?
3. What are the real names of Molière, Voltaire, and Anatole France?
4. How many dreadnaughts were in the navies of the world in 1912? How many in 1915?
5. What events occurred in the War of the Nations on May 1 and May 7, 1915?
6. Who was the "Old Man Eloquent"? What important offices did his father and his son hold?
7. What astronomical societies are there in the world?
8. How many bales of cotton were produced in the United States in 1839? In 1860?
9. What is the Lincoln Highway? Where may four magazine articles on it be found?
10. Give the career of the present Governor of Illinois.
11. Give a brief account of the siege of Mafeking. What is "mafficking"?
12. Give the career of Clyde Fitch. Name six plays by him.
13. Mention ten colleges in Ohio.
14. "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." Who wrote this? Give the dates of his birth and death, and the names and dates of all his works.
15. What was Dr. Samuel Johnson's opinion of America?
16. "The pen is mightier than the sword." Where does this occur? Give the name of the author. What is his relation to the author of *Lucille*?
17. Mention five war plays of 1915.
18. Who was Rob Roy? Where may the best accounts of his adventures be found?

19. The career of the present Emperor of Japan.

20. What are the real names of Mmes. Sembrich, Calvé, and Gadski?

21. Name fifteen decisive battles of the world before 1816.

22. Where was Achilles vulnerable, and why? What killed him?

23. Mention an authoritative biography of Lamb, Carlyle, Lowell, and Hawthorne.

24. Who is the present Secretary of War? Give his career, his party, his salary, and his state.

25. The farthest north reached by Nansen, Duke D'Abruzzi, Baldwin, Kane, and Peary (on his next to the last trip).

26. The difference between a Saga and an Edda. Name two of each, and their best translations.

27. Give the date of publication, period, scene, and prominent historical character of *Romola?* Who was the author? Name five other books by the same writer.

28. What was the Hejira, and what is its use in reckoning time?

29. What is a Passion Play, and why is it so called? Where is the most famous one given, and how often?

Part II

KINDS OF COMPOSITION

12. Introduction. — A classification of all prose composition into four forms — Exposition, Argument, Description, and Narrative — is of course a rough division, as would be a classification of gardens or anything else. Yet it seems necessary, for each form has its separate technique, which the beginner must learn. For any one who sits down to write almost certainly has as his main purpose the wish to explain, argue, describe, or narrate. Suppose, for example, that he is trying to write something about baseball. He may wish merely to explain the game, in which case he must not argue, describe, or narrate, except incidentally. He may wish to argue that the rules of baseball should be changed in certain respects, in which case he must stick to that single aim. Or he may desire to depict the appearance of a baseball field on a certain afternoon in May, and if so he has still another definite problem, quite different from the task of explanation or argument. Or, finally, his purpose may be to tell how his school team won the game in the final inning. In this last case everything else must be subordinate to narrative.

Such a division of composition should not diminish for any one the enjoyment of books in which all these kinds

of composition are skillfully mingled. Nor need it lead a beginner to assume that he cannot himself attempt a composition in which, for example, the purpose is explanatory and the form narrative.

So we shall examine successively Exposition (including Criticism and Biography), Argument, Description, and Narrative.

CHAPTER II

EXPOSITION

PURE EXPOSITION

13. Definition and Kinds. — When we explain a term (such as piracy) or a process (such as the manufacture of artificial ice) or any systematic thing (such as baseball, or the feudal system, or the organization of a city fire department) we are either speaking or writing Exposition. Exposition, then, is simply explanation. It is a very common and very useful form of writing and it plays a considerable part in conversation, too. Suppose, for instance, that on your way to an examination you are asked the nearest way to a certain building. Your answer is a short exposition. Suppose that in that examination you are asked, "What were the causes of the Civil War?" Your answer is an exposition. Suppose that after the examination you pick up a book called *How to Play Bridge*. That entire book is an exposition.

14. Choosing a Subject.

1. Choose subjects for which the explanatory method — not the argumentative, descriptive, or narrative method — is the natural mode of development. There are many subjects which might conceivably be expounded, but which if allowed to take their natural course drift into some other kind of writing. These are poor subjects for those who need practice in pure exposition.

2. Since exposition is explanation, the one who explains must know a good deal about the subject. Choose subjects, therefore, on which your knowledge is as full as possible. A theme on "How to Travel in the Tropics" by a person who had never been outside of northern Vermont would probably be unsuccessful.

3. This does not mean that you must always avoid bookish subjects in favor of games which you know how to play or processes which you have actually watched. It means that when you take subjects which necessitate dependence on books you should try by every possible means to make them seem lively and important.

4. Avoid subjects which every one knows about or thinks he knows about: an explanation of "How to Use a Knife and Fork" would have to be very clever and very tactful to escape failure, and hardly any one would begin a magazine article entitled "How to Black Boots." A successful subject must be one the technique of which is difficult enough to make the reader feel the need of instruction.

5. Avoid subjects that are too big. "Fishing," even if you know all about it, is too large. You will certainly succeed better if you limit yourself to "Fly Fishing for Trout," or "Fishing through the Ice for Pickerel," or some other phase of the subject. Particularly is this true if your knowledge has been gained from experience rather than from reading. You have, perhaps, watched the making of hay in New Hampshire. If so, write, not on "Haymaking," but on "Haymaking in New Hampshire," for haymaking in the Middle West may be quite a different matter.

6. Do not — except facetiously — write on subjects in which expertness cannot possibly be attained by read-

ing a book of instructions: "How to be Popular" is an art not to be learned from any book.

15. Gathering Material. — Far more important than any rhetorical principle in Exposition is the matter of truthfulness, correctness, reliability. Indeed, if it has not *a sound basis in fact*, no amount of skill in style can make an exposition important, or even safe. For example, one of the briefest and commonest forms of exposition is the recipe for preparing food or medicine. Untruthfulness in such an exposition may result in discomfort, illness, or — if wrong directions are given for handling powerful drugs — even death. Similarly, if wrong directions are given for making a canoe watertight, or for avoiding fever in tropical countries, the consequences may be very serious indeed.

Do not feel, however, that you can avoid all responsibility for such consequences by writing on something like "The Powers of an English Cabinet Minister" in which errors are "not serious." All errors are serious. Whatever your subject, you must feel, more deeply than you feel the importance of any rhetorical principle, the tug of conscience that forces you to search the literature of the subject, to cross-examine your own experience, to weigh, to reject, to alter, to think hard and long, in order that your work may, above everything else, be a *truthful* account. If you have not this feeling, and cannot acquire it, you will merely waste your own time and that of your instructor by going through the motions of writing an exposition.

16. Considering the Reader.[1] — In no kind of writing is it more important than in exposition to have a certain reader or a definite body of readers distinctly in mind.

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, 18 ff., and consider the usefulness of "Dick."

Regard your teacher not as your reader, but as a coach who tells you whether you are or are not reaching your readers. You will certainly not reach them unless you know (*a*) who they are, (*b*) how much they know about the subject, (*c*) how much they care about it, (*d*) how much they know about related subjects which can be used as illustrations, and (*e*) what prejudices they have which require to be overcome. If you examine text-books and other published expositions, you will see that authors often show by their titles or prefaces that they know precisely whom they are addressing: *Freshman Rhetoric*, *Chemistry for Beginners*, *The Amateur Gardener's Guide*, — these very titles are lessons in definiteness of purpose. You have one advantage over an actual author, however: you can successfully address your exposition to a single person (such as your younger brother) or a small group of people (such as the pupils of your preparatory school) whom you know; whereas an actual author aims at large bodies of people whom he does not know as individuals. Whether you address one person or many, you must make such a strong and constant effort of the imagination as will enable you to *read your reader's mind:* it is as important as it is to read your opponent's intentions in a game. Do not begin to write, therefore, until you know for whom you are writing. Then you will be likely to see — and include — whatever explanations are needful, and equally clearly you will see — and omit — whatever explanations are superfluous.

17. Planning the Exposition. — The planning of exposition according to the method here suggested is not a device of the teacher to make the task more difficult: it is, on the contrary, a trial balance, a "stitch in time," a form of

insurance against bad structure. It is habitually used by experienced writers who, since they are trying to earn a living rather than to please an instructor, cannot afford to spend their time in going through unnecessary motions.

The reason that time spent on an outline is time saved in the later stages of writing is just this: the more of the theme we can see at once, the more distinct will be our idea of the relation of the parts. If you wish to get a clear idea of the relative position of the Southern States, you do not merely read about the matter, nor do you consult an atlas in which Georgia occupies one page and South Carolina another. You look at a map on which, although each state is reduced in size, all the states are shown in their correct relative position. The same reason that makes pictures, maps, and charts vastly more effective than text for certain purposes makes an outline plan the best test of the relative order and weight of the material. For a plan is a kind of picture, and a very vivid one so far as the order of points and the matter of coördination and subordination are concerned. A complete theme of a thousand words is a very difficult thing to hold off at arm's length in order that one may ask: Have I taken up these points in the most effective order? Are my proportions right? Is that second point of equal importance with the third, or is it a subordinate detail under the first main heading? And to move about whole paragraphs is bothersome in comparison with moving about single sentences, especially if each sentence is jotted down on a separate slip of paper. In other words, during the early stages of a composition we are keeping our minds open to various possibilities: a given bit of material may turn out to be of prime importance, of

minor importance, or of no importance at all; it may belong early in the theme, or in the middle, or toward the end. While we are thus moving our material about, we need to have it in light and movable form, and we need to be able to make a chart of our entire theme in order to see the proper relation of the parts. Therefore a theme well planned is half written.

For rather short compositions, especially if the structure is fairly simple, an effective plan, so far as it goes, can be made by reducing each of your proposed main divisions to a topic-sentence, arranging the topic-sentences — after trying different orders — in a single column, numbering them, and giving them — so far as you can — parallel form. Such a rough plan can be jotted down under the most trying conditions — in an hour examination, for example; and the result will certainly be a better paper than if no time is spent in planning.

If the composition is long, however, and at all elaborate in structure, a regular outline, with headings and subheadings to the third or fourth degree, will probably be necessary. The following outline, prepared by an undergraduate who wished to write an exposition of one thousand words on "How Trails are Made," is a fairly good illustration of the method:

HOW TRAILS ARE MADE

I. To have a general idea how trails are made is useful, in order
   A. That the traveler may be better able to find his way in the forest.
   B. That one may be able to build a trail himself.
   C. That one may better appreciate the hard work of other trail builders.

II. Principle of building trails.
  A. There are three main objects in view:
    1. To reach destination as soon as possible.
    2. To make the grade as gradual as possible if on a mountain.
    3. To have the trail pass as many points of interest as possible.
  B. These three objects are accomplished
    1. By making the trail as direct and distinct as possible.
    2. By making the trail as free from obstacles as possible.
    3. By many other ways which will be explained in the detailed process.

III. Detailed process of construction.
  A. Implements used
    1. By a working party of several persons.
    2. By a single trail builder.
  B. Methods of construction under different conditions:
    1. Through the forest, using
      a. Blazes.
      b. Signs.
    2. Crossing streams, using
      a. Log bridges.
      b. Stepping stones.
    3. On bare or rocky ground, using
      a. Cairns of stone.
      b. Splashes of paint.
      c. Signs.

IV. (Conclusion) A short paragraph summarizing the composition.

18. General Rules for Making Plans. — In studying such a plan you observe

1. That to place headings in column means that they are coördinate in value and that therefore they will as a rule occupy something like the same amount of space in the theme, and that they will be so introduced by connectives [1] that their equal rank will appear in the finished theme.

2. That the main headings are designated by Roman numerals (I, II), those in the next column by capitals (*A*, *B*, etc.), the next by arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.), and the next by small letters (*a*, *b*, *c*, etc.). If the plan is carried out further, any figures or letters will serve if they have not been already employed, and if they are consistently used.

19. Special Rules for Making Plans.

1. Ordinarily every subheading must be a real subdivision. Since it is obviously impossible to subdivide a thing into less than two parts, a single subheading, unless it is an example, should ordinarily be either (*a*) combined with the heading next above it or (*b*) supplemented by other headings. The first of the following examples illustrates (*a*); the second, (*b*):

(*a*)

I. The Pleasures of Collecting.
   A. Old China.

(*b*)

I. Agriculture in New England.
   A. In Vermont.

2. Each group of headings, taken together, should sufficiently cover the field designated in the heading next above them in rank. Thus, if I have a heading "The

[1] See p. 226 on Coherence.

Government of the United States," my subheadings must include the various branches of that government. That it failed to obey this rule was the trouble with the second example (*b*). Difficult as it undoubtedly is to be sure that we have covered the necessary ground when we write about "The Causes of the French Revolution," or "The Results of Darwin's Discoveries," or "The Differences between Napoleon and Washington," we shall perhaps find help in these simple rules:

(*a*) Read widely about the subject.

(*b*) Analyze your headings carefully to see if they appear to make a complete set.

(*c*) If in doubt, show by your title that you are not sure of having included everything. (For example, "The Chief Causes of the French Revolution" or "A Few Results of Darwin's Discoveries.")

3. The headings must be mutually exclusive; that is, they must not overlap. Sometimes it is very easy to see that they overlap; sometimes it is difficult. In the the headings which follow

A. American History of the 19th Century
B. The Period of the Civil War

it is evident that *A* includes *B*.

Few writers would be guilty of that kind of overlapping. But when the divisions are neither chronological nor geographical, it is not so easy to *follow the same principle of subdivision* throughout an entire set of headings. Thus, if I subdivide the heading "Students of Yale College" into "Students from the South," "Sophomores," "Students interested in Music," and "Members of the Glee Club," I have utterly failed to apply the same

principle of division. It is, in fact, evident that a man might belong to all of these four classes.

4. The headings should be, as far as possible, parallel in form. The first subheading is pretty likely to read right on, as it should, from the heading above it in rank. But by the time we have reached our third or fourth subheading, it is not so easy to remember the construction with which we began. Did we commit ourselves to a set of infinitive phrases? Or substantive clauses? Or imperatives? Or participial phrases? We must keep on as we began; in other words, *each* heading — not merely the first — must read right on from the superior heading.

5. The plan should be one which (if figures and letters are omitted) can be read aloud smoothly.

6. The subheadings should be carried out far enough to insure, not merely the right order of paragraphs, but also the best arrangement of material within each paragraph. At the same time, it would be absurd to make headings for all illustrative and other subordinate material.

7. It is not always necessary, or desirable, to have a formal introduction and a formal conclusion. The reader should feel that the theme begins and ends satisfactorily, not mechanically. The avoidance of too much formality in the plan will help to secure this effect. To say that every composition should have a beginning, a middle, and an end is very far from saying that the actual words "Introduction," "Body," and "Conclusion" should be used.

8. It is not practicable to work out all of the main headings first and then to fill in with subheadings:

material turns up in a haphazard fashion, big and little matters all together, and it must accordingly be sorted out from the first.

9. This sorting will be most easily done if a separate card or slip of paper is used for each point. The slips can then be arranged on a desk or large table, and their proper order and importance can be studied to great advantage.

20. Unity. — The principle of unity requires that a composition should express one central idea. The first thing to do is to find out what your central idea is and to rule out all material which is irrelevant to this idea. You can accomplish this result by careful analysis of your subject. The most practical device is the use of a plan.[1] In exposition the plan will show you just what points belong to your subject and what ones should be excluded. Furthermore, you should regard your subject from a well-defined point of view, and hold to this point of view consistently. This point of view should be adapted to the mental background of your readers.[2]

21. Coherence. — To make the structure of a composition coherent, you should arrange the material so that the relation of part to part shall be clear. You may choose whatever arrangement best suits your material and purpose. There are a number of modes of progression: (*a*) progression in time (as in explanations of processes, in biography, history, etc.); (*b*) progression in space (as in explanations of factories, etc.); (*c*) progression from the familiar to the unfamiliar; (*d*) progression from one division to another; (*e*) progression from cause to

[1] Cf. pages 31 ff.

[2] Cf. page 31.

effect; (*f*) progression in order of climax.[1] When you have chosen the best mode of development, you should make the relation of the subdivisions to each other absolutely clear by means of announcements of method, transitions, and summaries.[2]

22. Emphasis. — To make the structure of a composition emphatic, you should put the most important ideas in the most important positions. The end of a composition is more important than the beginning, since it leaves the impression of completeness. In exposition the beginning announces the subject and should arouse attention. The ending sums up the whole. This position you should utilize to the best of your ability, for it gives you a chance to enforce your central idea.[3]

23. Writing the Exposition. — Expository material, unlike narrative material, is all in sight from the beginning. There is no dramatic climax, no mystery. If I withhold certain explanations until toward the end of my book, it is because my reader cannot comprehend them at the beginning. Thus exposition deals, as it were, with a group of objects spread out in full view; whereas the course of narrative may be likened to a winding stream around the turns in which — except as he looks back — the reader is not permitted to see. This general likeness between expository material and material spread out upon a plain surface will guide us in many points of expository procedure.

[1] Which of these methods are used in the articles beginning on pp. 18, 31, 47, 90, 99, and 130 of *College Readings?*

[2] Cf. in *College Readings,* the articles beginning on pp. 2, 34, 43, 47, 58, 85, 130, and 149.

[3] Cf. in *College Readings* the selections beginning on pp. 14, 18, 27, 109, 137, and 173.

24. The Introduction. — In general, the introduction of an exposition has three aims:

1. To arouse interest. Those who feel that exposition need not be interesting, who think of the instructor as their only reader, and who take advantage of the fact that he must read their work whether it is tiresome or not, are making a very serious mistake. Let them try to imitate the conditions in the real world of letters, where, if the first paragraph is dull, most readers turn to another article in the magazine.[1]

2. To explain the point of view when such an explanation is necessary. Note that in a book this explanation is usually made in the preface rather than in the first paragraph, and consider whether a more precise subtitle or a footnote will not explain your purpose. If it will, you are so much the freer in writing your introduction.

3. To show what is going to be done. It must always be remembered that in exposition we are taking something to pieces, explaining the nature and use of each of the parts, and showing the relation of that part to its neighbors. It is, accordingly, of great importance that the reader should constantly know where he is with reference to the general outline. One means of helping him to keep his bearings is to give him at the beginning a bird's-eye view of the country through which he is to travel. Accordingly, we find Lord Bryce at the beginning of *The American Commonwealth*, an exposition which extends to more than fifteen hundred pages, outlining his plan in two pages, which are thus introduced:

[1] Or let them study such an interesting exposition as that in *College Readings*, 18 ff.

Even when limited by the exclusion of history and law, the subject remains so vast and complex as to make necessary an explanation of the conception I have formed of it, and of the plan upon which the book has been constructed.[1]

It would be out of proportion to the whole if, in a composition of a thousand or fifteen hundred words, you took more than a short paragraph to outline your plan. Not to outline it briefly, however, would be to plunge the reader into unmapped country.[2]

25. Securing Clearness. — To secure clearness it is constantly necessary to think of the reader and to realize correctly and vividly his outlook upon the subject, particularly his state of knowledge about it. The only matters that need to be explained are those which the reader does not understand. In other words, the writer is endeavoring not to show his own knowledge, but to supply the gaps in the knowledge of the reader. It is an equally serious mistake to leave an essential point unexplained and to obtrude an explanation of that which the reader already understands.

Even though he sees the importance of considering the reader, however, the writer of exposition must also see that what he is constantly attempting is definition. To make a good definition we must say of the thing to be defined that which is

(*a*) true of that thing
(*b*) true of no other thing
(*c*) clear in itself

[1] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, London, 1891, I, 5.

[2] Notice the first paragraph of Professor Palmer's essay on "Self-Cultivation in English" (*College Readings*, 130).

For example, to say that a colonel is the inside of a nut violates (*a*). To say that a colonel is an officer violates (*b*), for what is here said of a colonel is also true of an admiral. To say that a colonel is a military officer is better, but still (*b*) is violated, for generals and majors are also military officers. To say that a colonel is a military officer above a lieutenant-colonel and below a general officer in rank, although it violates neither (*a*) nor (*b*), does, for many persons, violate (*c*), for not every one knows just what a lieutenant-colonel or a general officer may be. To say that a colonel is a military officer who commands a regiment is a fair way to satisfy (*a*), (*b*), and (*c*). In other words, our purpose in making a definition is to place a thing in the general group to which it belongs and also to explain how it is to be distinguished from all the other members of that group. This larger group is what logicians call the *genus*, and the characteristics which distinguish one member of that group from every other member are known as the *differentia*. Thus "colonel" is that particular member of the genus ("military officer") to which, and to which alone, the differentia ("who commands a regiment") can be correctly applied.[1]

Additional clearness may perhaps be secured if it is remembered that exposition is generic in its nature. The definiteness which is so helpful in description is in exposition actually injurious. In describing a particular game of baseball, we not only may, but should, emphasize the particular color and arrangement of that special scene. We are thankful for every spot of color in the grandstand, and we do not fail to record the fact that the second baseman has red hair. But in exposition we are

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, 6 ff.

dealing not with a particular second baseman, tall or short, light or dark, but with the second baseman in general; and we say of him only those things which are true of the second baseman considered apart from any particular person who occupies that position.

26. Illustrations. — Generalizations, however, need to be supported by specific cases. Explanations of things unknown need to be illuminated by comparison with things known. Constant illustrations (by which is meant not pictures or diagrams merely, useful though these are, but anything which throws light on the subject) should be employed. If you have a photograph of a player making a certain stroke in tennis, paste it in the margin of your theme; if you can make a little sketch, or better, a finished diagram, do so. If you can summarize the increase or decrease of something by a rising or a falling line, like a fever chart, use that illustration, for it has the same value that your outline plan had: it gives vividly and almost instantaneously an effect which can hardly be produced by words.

27. Maintaining interest. — Although to give rules for maintaining interest is a little like telling a person how to be popular, some help may be got from the following suggestions:

1. Many writers, having spent hours in making an outline, and wishing to get the full return for their labor, transfer bodily to the finished theme the material of the outline with all its angularity of structure, so that their plan sticks up through the finished text and makes it bony. Do not do this. Remember that the plan was *for your benefit*. Your reader does not care to see much of it. He would rather be made comfortable by an invisible courier

than constantly reminded that his trip has been methodically arranged for him in advance. Make the structure, therefore, at once informal and unmistakable.

2. It is easy to forget that in exposition, as well as in argument, there are prejudices to be overcome, and that the earlier they are overcome the better. If, for example, you are writing about *The Roman House*, your reader may turn aside because he feels that this is merely an ancient subject. To overcome that prejudice, you endeavor in your introduction to show that it is of interest to a modern reader. Again, you may be writing on a learned subject in which you wish to interest the average reader. You therefore try in your introduction to overcome his prejudice that the topic is of importance to scholars alone. The following introduction to Lord Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* is an admirable example of a beginning which, in addition to other functions, perfectly fulfills this requirement of removing a prejudice, — in this case, the notion that the Holy Roman Empire has no connection with modern times.

Of those who, in August, 1806, read in the newspapers that the Emperor Francis II had announced to the Germanic Diet his resignation of the imperial crown there were probably few who reflected that the oldest political institution in the world had come to an end. Yet it was so. The Empire which a note issued by a diplomatist on the banks of the Danube extinguished was the same which the crafty nephew of Julius had won for himself, against the powers of the East, beneath the cliffs of Actium; and which had preserved almost unaltered, through eighteen centuries of time, and through the greatest changes in extent, in power, and in character, a title and pretensions from which their ancient meaning had long since de-

parted. Nothing else so directly linked the old world to the new — nothing else displayed so many strange contrasts of the present and the past, and summed up in those contrasts so much of European history. From the days of Constantine till far down into the Middle Ages it was, conjointly with the Papacy, the recognized centre and head of Christendom, exercising over the minds of men an influence such as its material strength could never have commanded.

It is of this influence and of the causes that gave it power rather than of the external history of the Empire that the following pages are designed to treat.[1]

28. Style and Manner.[2]

1. Let the exposition have individual quality. Make the reader ask who wrote it. A person eager to learn will, to be sure, wade through a pretty dull book of directions if he has to; but dullness is a part of the unnecessary friction of life. Let us try to diminish it.

2. Think always of the reader, not only as a help to completeness, but as a help to fullness and interest as well. Explanations which you may be tempted into making if you do not consider any particular body of readers, will instantly reveal themselves as dull or tiresome if you imagine them read aloud to the class.

3. Although the main reason for your writing the exposition is that you are supposed to know more about the subject than your reader does, try to avoid giving the impression of superiority in the unpleasant sense of that word.

[1] James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire,* revised edition, New York, 1904, p. 1.

[2] Cf. *College Readings,* 137 ff. (William James, "The Social Value of the College-bred").

4. In your style shun the cook-book imperative ("add sugar; boil two hours"). A carelessly written exposition is full of these imperatives, which are bad because (*a*) any type of sentence repeated over and over becomes tiresome, (*b*) to be constantly told that he must do a thing rubs the reader the wrong way, and (*c*) sentences beginning with imperatives are staccato and disconnected in effect.

EXERCISES

1. Briefly define, without consulting a dictionary, the following terms: (*a*) piracy; (*b*) usury; (*c*) patronage; (*d*) friendship; (*e*) envy; (*f*) prejudice; (*g*) freezing; (*h*) combustion; (*i*) neighbor; (*j*) champion; (*k*) surgeon; (*l*) fleet (noun); (*m*) lamp; (*n*) candle; (*o*) andirons; (*p*) umbrella; (*q*) clock; (*r*) fountain pen.

2. What are the differences between (*a*) a house and a home; (*b*) an invention and a discovery; (*c*) a road, a street, and a path; (*d*) a fisherman and an angler; (*e*) a game and a sport; (*f*) a canoe and a boat; (*g*) a picture, a portrait, and a photograph; (*h*) a boot and a shoe?

3. Would the following subjects be suitable for exposition in 800 words? If you reject any, give your reasons. Some of these subjects may seem to you possible, but dangerous. If so, point out the dangers.

a. Preparedness.
b. The Advantages of a Small College.
c. How we built our Bungalow.
d. President Cleveland's Administration.
e. On a Cattle Steamer.
f. Getting Ready for a Shooting Trip.
g. Lighthouses.
h. Working in a Bank.
i. On the Farm in June.

j. The Interurban Railway.
k. How Lumber is Cut.
l. Clocks,
m. Photography.

4. Break up into the necessary number of principal subheadings the following subjects: College Athletics, Winter Sports, The United States Navy, The Government of England, Student Government, Undergraduate Publications, American Colonial History, Recent Progress in Science, Some Famous Inventions, Travel and Transportation in Early Days. (Note that each of these subdivisions is large enough for a long composition.)

5. Correct the following classifications:

1.

A. Black bass are found
1. In deep water
2. In rocky places

2.

A. Literature in England
1. Before 1600

3.

A. The Army of the United States
1. Artillery
2. Cavalry

4.

A. Tackle
1. Rod
a. Reel
(1) Line
2. Landing Net

5.

A. Nineteenth Century American History
1. Before 1850
2. Since the Civil War
3. Of New England

6.

A. Accuracy in Speech
1. Words should fit thoughts
   a. Looseness
   b. Precision

7.

A. Landing the fish
1. Use of landing-net

8.

A. Structure of the paragraph
1. Must be unified
2. Coherence
3. Be emphatic

9.

A. The means of attaining Coherence:
1. The use of transition paragraphs and summaries.
2. To enumerate at the outset the points that are to be dwelt upon, and then — as each comes up in turn — to refer to the first enumeration.
3. When possible use a chronological arrangement of events.

6. Make a plan of some short exposition in one of your textbooks.

7. Find in each of the following topics several subjects each suitable for an exposition of about 1000 words: Automobiles, Housekeeping, Camping, Travel, Vacations, Clubs.

8. Qualify each of the subjects into which you have broken up the topics under (7) so that a precise point of view will be indicated. For example, if in working out (7) you have broken up "Camping" into such a topic — among others — as "Getting into Good Physical Condition for a Fortnight's Camping Trip in Maine," you might indicate one possible point of view by such a title as "Advice to a City Boy on Getting into Good Physical Condition for a Fortnight's Camping Trip in Maine." [1]

9. Write an introductory paragraph for an exposition, in which you *informally* (*a*) secure interest, (*b*) tell what kind of people you are addressing, and (*c*) tell what your main divisions are.

10. Find four books (not text-books) which seem to you to be expository in aim. Does the title, or anything in the preface, show to what class of readers they are addressed?

CRITICISM

29. What Criticism Is. — "Have you read *The Adventures of Christopher?*"

"Yes, isn't it *won*derful?"

"*Isn't* it wonderful!"

"Why, I was simply thrilled!"

"So was I. Well, good-by."

"Good-by."

If for this amiable but uninstructive exchange of adjectives we substitute the reasons and standards on which such adjectives ought to be based, we have Criticism, which is simply the detailed application to a certain piece of work of such standards as the writer himself seems to have tried, or should have tried, to keep in mind while executing it. The very person who says that he

[1] It is not to be imagined that this would be a good actual title: it is too clumsy. But it serves to indicate a definite expository problem.

cannot write criticism is probably making criticisms a hundred times a day, but he is not giving his reasons or following up his judgment by trying to subdivide good and bad into their manifold degrees and kinds. One of the reasons why he is not doing this is because he is lazy. He says, "Of course I do not know anything about criticism, but I know what I like."

30. What to Write About.

1. Choose something about which you have opinions of your own. If the subject is prescribed for you, read *in* the subject — not *about* it — until you acquire a decided opinion. It is just as ineffective to criticize something that you do not care about as it is to argue the opposite side of the question from that on which your real enthusiasm lies.

2. Choose something that you like with reservations rather than something that you wholly like or wholly dislike.

3. Subdivide large subjects, just as you would in exposition, argument, or description; a short criticism of Shakespeare would be as futile as a short description of Switzerland or a one-page explanation of the organization of the German army.

4. Cut down your subjects, not merely because short criticisms on large subjects are theoretically impossible, but because your actual reading necessitates limitation of the field. You have read only a few of Shakespeare's plays; therefore, you cannot criticize them all.

31. Considering the Reader. — You may choose for your reader an individual or a large group, a real person or an imaginary person, a person in agreement with you or one in disagreement, a person who has seen the work that you are talking about or one who has not, an expert

or a beginner, a schoolboy or a college freshman or a person of much greater general maturity and special knowledge. But in any case be definite: choose some one whom you can visualize clearly in your literary imagination, and then consider him throughout the criticism.

32. Subordinate Elements in Criticism.

1. Remember that an account of the life of an author or painter or musician is not a criticism of his work, although it may be useful as a subordinate part of a criticism upon his work.

2. Remember that a summary of the contents of a book or a perfectly neutral account of the subject-matter of a symphony or picture is not criticism, although it may be useful in preparing the way for criticism,[1] just as the expository element in argument is a useful preliminary to the argument itself.

3. If these expository elements are needed, keep them strictly subordinate, keep them strictly neutral, and as a rule get them in early.

33. Consider What the Author[2] Has Tried to Do and judge him with reference to his aim. For example, no one supposes that a novel of incident — like a detective story — and a novel of character — like Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* — have the same aim. The former makes a great deal of plot and very little of character; the latter makes a great deal of character and requires only enough plot to bring out all the latent possibilities of the people in the story. To criticize *Pride and Preju-*

[1] As is the case in *College Readings*, 196–199.

[2] The word *author* as used in this chapter means not merely a person who has written something, but a person who has created any work of art, — book, picture, symphony, statue, or cathedral.

dice unfavorably, therefore, because it is less exciting than *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is much like saying that you prefer bicycles to steam rollers because steam rollers are so heavy. Remember that when we ask "Is it a good book?" we mean to ask if it is a good biography, or a good book of essays, or a good tragedy in blank verse, or a good collection of short stories. Excellence in each of these types is a different kind of excellence. To decide whether a book is good without knowing what are the points of excellence in its special kind would be like judging a dog without reference to its breed or a building without regard to its purpose.

To consider what the author is trying to do is a matter of finding out (1) what are the aims which all may be presumed to follow who attempt that particular kind of thing — lyric, caricature, symphony, concerto, short story, or oration.[1] We find out these aims by studying the technique of various arts and by learning in each the names of the principal terms, the history of that art, the lives of its great masters, the names and characteristics of their principal works, and the history of opinion about them.[2] (2) What special purpose the author had in the work under consideration. This his biography may perhaps tell, or the preface of his book, or perhaps we may safely learn it by inference.

[1] To see how this may be worked out, cf. *College Readings*, 201.

[2] It is impossible even to mention here the names of elementary books on the different kinds of criticism. Perhaps the most useful single volume for the beginner is Charles Mills Gayley and Fred Newton Scott's *Introduction to the Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism*. For criticism in the other arts, see the articles on those arts in the Encyclopædia Britannica and search the subject catalogue of the nearest large library.

34. Consider to What Extent the Author has Succeeded in His Aim, and Why He Has Succeeded. — As we try to formulate our attack upon the causes of our author's success, the greatest dangers will be our tendency (1) to judge in the lump rather than point by point, (2) to speak vaguely rather than specifically, and (3) to forget that evidence is constantly needed unless the reader may be assumed to possess this evidence. Let us consider these three dangers separately.

35. On Methodical Subdivision. — The inexperienced critic has no idea how much there is to say about a work of art until he begins to draw up a list of points that must be considered before one can decide its merit. He tends to jump to the conclusion "It is good," or "It is bad." That is too summary. It may, on the whole, be good; but usually this means that it has a dozen or fifteen or a score of perfectly distinct good qualities and in all probability two or three or a half dozen clear defects. What are these good qualities, and what are these defects? What about the originality of the work, its unity, consistency, learning, humor, and style? Any one of these points is good for a paragraph at least, even in the hands of a beginner. Take unity, for example. What is the main point of the work? Is this point steadily kept in view? Is it mechanically and tiresomely reiterated? How is the unity secured? That is to say, does the author formally announce his purpose or does he make you feel that he has a purpose? Should he have secured his unity by more formal or by less formal means? Are there any digressions which injure the unity? Should they be omitted? By the time you have given specific answers to these questions, you have

said a good deal about unity. And so it is with the other qualities. But remember not to parade your headings formally: make the reader feel that every point is vital, not that you are merely doing your duty as some textbook said you must. Get from point to point informally. If you find nothing worth saying on any particular point, leave it out. Remember that nothing is worth saying that seems foolish when it is put simply in a single sentence. Therefore, if you find that you cannot get along without a lot of critical jargon, the chances are that you have no valid point to make.

36. On Being Specific. — Everyone recognizes the futility of trying to write a vivid description by using such words as *large*, *small*, *beautiful*, and *ugly*. How large? In what way beautiful? So in criticism we can do nothing with such words as *attractive*, *impressive*, *interesting*, *dull*, *unreadable*. The first way to be specific in criticism, then, as in other kinds of writing, is to use words that fly straight to the mark. The second way is to feel the reality of the qualities that you are talking about. A book is a real thing, which makes a noise when we drop it on the floor. But the unity of a book is an abstraction: no one can taste it or see it or bounce it on the sidewalk. In dealing with these physical unrealities, which to a good critic are as actual as slates and pencils, the critic makes every effort to choose his words so as to enhance the reality of the qualities that he is discussing. For example, he is criticizing a certain story, the plot of which fails to hold the attention of the reader until the end. How can he speak about that abstract quality in a lively way? He can say that the plot becomes "sluggish" toward the end, and thereby suggest a slow and

muddy stream; or he can say that it "sags," and thereby suggest a slack bell rope or a telephone wire which needs tightening. Successful criticism is full of such metaphors as these. One opens Professor Gates's essay on Matthew Arnold,[1] and one finds him saying of Arnold's style that it "has a falsetto note," that it "lacks resonance," that there seems to be in it "an ill adjustment of overtones," that it has "conventional restraint," that it shows "a quiet manner," that it has "an emotional throb," that it is "severe," that it is "casual," that it has a "rasping effect," that it is "rich in color." And it will be remembered that Sir Walter Scott, comparing his stories with Jane Austen's, spoke of his own work as the "big bow-wow" kind of thing. An indispensable part of the critic's equipment is this perception that every excellence and every defect of style is like some person or some real object and that by this likeness it can be explained.

37. Evidence in Criticism. — Generalizations about an author's favorite subjects or his prevalent faults and virtues, or assertions of the excellence or defects of any given passage, must — like statements in argument — be supported by evidence. This means

1. That the critic must know his author;[2] otherwise, he cannot possibly make safe general statements. Suppose that, after having read two or three novels by a man who wrote a dozen or more, I write a criticism of him. At the worst, I may have happened to read the very novels which are least characteristic of the author, and thus nearly all of my generalizations may be incorrect.

[1] Lewis E. Gates, *Three Studies in Literature*, New York, Macmillan, 1899, pages 124–211.

[2] Cf. *College Readings*, 201 ff. and 203 ff.

At best, I shall certainly fail to give the impression of having considered the subject thoroughly.

2. That the critic must know his subject, which is a larger matter than knowing his author. Thus, if I write about Robert Louis Stevenson, my subject is not merely Stevenson: it is to some degree "Nineteenth Century Literature," it is "The Scottish Character," it is "The History of Lighthouses," it is "The Novel: its History, its Rules, and its Masters," "The Essay," "The Letter," and even "Criticism" itself. Let not this advice bring discouragement, however: let it rather mean that a critical paper on almost any significant subject is a good place to concentrate whatever wisdom we have and a good starting point for all the reading that we can make time for.

3. That when you attempt criticism you must not forget to apply what you have been told about English composition: the right way for you to do a short story is the right way for Hawthorne to do it. Judge him by the doctrines of the text-books, but do not use the jargon of the text-books. Do not say, "Having considered Hawthorne's plots, let us now turn to his characterization."

38. Conclusion. — Finally, remember that there is no basis whatever in good criticism for the old gibe that a critic is a disappointed author, whose aim is, by malicious faultfinding, to get even with the world of letters to which he has never been admitted. The criticism of a large-minded and well-informed person is only a very little below the highest creative literature.[1] To succeed in saying of a poet what others feel but cannot formulate,

[1] Examine *College Readings*, 201 ff., 214 ff., and 203 ff.

or to perceive the excellence in a neglected novelist or musician and to praise him years before he is recognized by the many, — these are no slight achievements.

EXERCISES

1. Write a short composition — perhaps two paragraphs — on two authors or books which have impressed you strongly but differently.

2. Select some book, or other work of art, which you like very much, but which you think many people are likely to neglect because they will misunderstand its purpose or quality. Point out this purpose or quality as engagingly as you can.

3. Select some book, poem, picture, or piece of music which you used to like, but no longer care for (or, if you prefer, which you now like much better than you used to), and explain the reasons for your change of opinion.

4. Criticize the following passage:

Prose is a form of language, which is not in verse. It is usually divided under three heads: first, essays, second novels, and third arguments. An essay, which is not as common as other forms of prose, is a short composition of description. It is written almost always on some literary point and on this account is only undertaken by the most experienced writers. But the novel is a very common form of prose, for it is more pleasing for the public to read. Nevertheless, it must have many great characteristics, such as Unity and a plot, in order to be classed under that style. Because of its subject and its chance for vivid description of exciting happenings, it is chosen by the majority of people for pleasure reading only. The third form of writing is the argument. This is used by political men, who are either trying to persuade another party to join them or to make their ideas clear. It takes skill to use this form of writing well and on that account is not used by many. But most all the writings of to-day are able to be classed under one of these three heads.

5. To each of the four following passages apply as many of the italicized adjectives as you think appropriate to characterize its purpose, tone, style, etc.

bare	*emotional*	*mystical*	*simple*
bombastic	*fanciful*	*obscure*	*sonorous*
clear	*feeble*	*ornate*	*startling*
cool	*harsh*	*paradoxical*	*stern*
cynical	*involved*	*rhythmic*	*tranquil*
dreamy	*ironical*	*robust*	*vigorous*
eloquent	*morose*		

(*a*) Thou, therefore, that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, parent of angels and men! next, thee I implore, omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting Love! and thou, the third subsistence of divine infinitude, illumining Spirit, the joy and solace of created things! one Tripersonal godhead! look upon this thy poor and almost spent and expiring church, leave her not thus a prey to these importunate wolves, that wait and think long till they devour thy tender flock; these wild boars that have broke into thy vineyard, and left the print of their polluting hoofs on the souls of thy servants. O let them not bring about their damned designs, that stand now at the entrance of the bottomless pit, expecting the watchword to open and let out those dreadful locusts and scorpions, to involve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness, where we shall never more see the sun of thy truth again, never hope for the cheerful dawn, never more hear the bird of morning sing. Be moved with pity at the afflicted state of this our shaken monarchy, that now lies labouring under her throes, and struggling against the grudges of more dreaded calamities.

(*b*) It is likewise proposed as a great advantage to the public, that if we once discard the system of the Gospel, all religion will of course be banished for ever; and consequently, along with it, those grievous prejudices of education, which, under the

names of *virtue*, *conscience*, *honour*, *justice*, and the like, are so apt to disturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are so hard to be eradicated, by right reason, or free-thinking, sometimes during the whole course of our lives.

(*c*) But the third Sister, who is also the youngest! — Hush! whisper while we talk of *her!* Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She drops not; and her eyes, rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be hidden: through the treble veil of crape which she wears the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this our youngest Sister moves with incalculable motions; bounding and with tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*, — Our Lady of Darkness.

(*d*) There is, however, another good work that is done by detective stories. While it is the constant tendency of the Old Adam to rebel against so universal and automatic a thing as civilization, to preach departure and rebellion, the romance of police activity keeps in some sense before the mind the fact that civilization itself is the most sensational of departures and the most romantic of rebellions. By dealing with the

unsleeping sentinels who guard the outposts of society, it tends to remind us that we live in an armed camp, making war with a chaotic world, and that the criminals, the children of chaos, are nothing but the traitors within our gates. When the detective in a police romance stands alone, and somewhat fatuously fearless amid the knives and fists of a thieves' kitchen, it does certainly serve to make us remember that it is the agent of social justice who is the original and poetic figure, while the burglars and footpads are merely placid old cosmic conservatives, happy in the immemorial respectability of apes and wolves. The romance of the police force is thus the whole romance of man. It is based on the fact that morality is the most dark and daring of conspiracies. It reminds us that the whole noiseless and unnoticeable police management by which we are ruled and protected is only a successful knight-errantry.

A Series of Tests which may be Useful in Formulating Short Criticisms

I. The work considered by itself.
  A. Structure.
    1. Central Thought.
      a. Is the central thought contained in one passage? If so, indicate the passage.
      b. Express this thought in your own words.
      c. Is this idea anywhere departed from?
      d. Is this departure a blemish?
      e. Is the idea expressed or is it concealed?
    2. Method of Development.
      a. Beginning:
        (1) Is the plan of the work announced at the beginning?
        (2) Should it have been? Why?
      b. Development: By which of the following methods does the author make the work progress?

(1) A series of fictitious events.
(2) A series of actual events.
(3) A series, formal or informal, of points.
(4) A series of strokes which together make a picture.

c. Ending:
(1) Is the ending a mere termination or a summary?
(2) Should it have been?
(3) Is it formal or informal?
(4) Should it have been?
(5) Should the author have ended when he did or sooner or later?
(6) Why?
(7) Did you foresee the ending? If so, when?
(8) Should the author have let you know the ending when he did or sooner or later?

B. Style and Tone.

1. Is the main purpose to give
   a. pleasure
   b. instruction
   c. both?
2. Does the author succeed in this purpose?
3. Is the style
   scholarly or popular
   lofty or colloquial
   emotional or rational
   imaginative or literal
   simple or elaborate?
4. Is the tone
   pessimistic or optimistic
   cynical or kindly?
5. Is the author's vocabulary
   large or small

scholarly or popular
pedantic or humanistic
used exactly or used loosely?

6. Is the work
moral, immoral, or unmoral?

II. The work considered in relation to the author's life and other work. Is it similar to the author's other work in
A. Central thought
B. Development
C. Style and tone?

III. The work considered in relation to similar works by other authors. What other author does this closely resemble in
A. Central thought
B. Style and tone?

BIOGRAPHY

39. Definition and Kinds. — Biography, as every one knows, is the record of a person's life, or, as a form of composition, it is the art of making such a record. Biographies differ greatly in length, of course, and they also differ considerably in purpose. For example, there is a life of Benjamin Franklin in the American Statesmen series, and also one in the American Men of Letters series: the first naturally emphasizes Franklin's public services; the second, his writings. Again, the Honorable Henry Cabot Lodge, writing a sketch of Francis Parkman for a book called *Hero Tales from American History*,[1] naturally emphasizes Parkman's heroic struggle against ill health. A person writing a chapter on Parkman for a

[1] See *College Readings*, pp. 145–148.

history of American literature would consider him as a man of letters.

The brevity of undergraduate composition virtually forbids real biography: the shortest fully developed biography is as long as all the themes of the Freshman year; yet at least four kinds of biography can be practiced:

1. The short analysis of a real character, minimizing dates and externals, and emphasizing the explanatory or critical element.

2. The narrative of a single incident in the life of an actual person. (This will be taken up later in more detail as a form of Narrative.)

3. The description of a person intended to bring out character. (This will later be reconsidered as a phase of Description and also of Narration.)

4. The miniature of a fully developed biography in which some attention is paid to each of the three preceding matters, and also some to dates and externals. This fourth type is very difficult to do successfully in a brief space.

40. Choosing a Subject.

1. Try to find for your biography a subject who, though great enough, is not too great. The writer to whom a thousand words seem an enormous amount often makes the mistake of thinking that the bigger the subject the easier it will be to find things to say. So he turns to Cæsar, Napoleon, and Washington. Not only are they too big for his purpose; they are so remote and so thoroughly established that only a very skillful biographer can see a fresh, true image of them through the haze of the past. On the other hand, do not, in your desire to avoid such great men, try to make a hero of your fellow townsman if he is not a hero.

2. Choose some one who is notable for character, — for quality as well as quantity of achievement. President Eliot's *John Gilley* [1] is an admirable example of what a remarkable judge of men can do with a life of "normal human development through mingled joy and sorrow, labor and rest, adversity and success, and through the tender loves of childhood, maturity, and age."

3. Let your subject be one who arouses your enthusiasm, though not your indiscriminate devotion. The feeling of the great biographers toward their subjects — Boswell's toward Johnson, Lockhart's toward Scott, Trevelyan's toward Macaulay — has usually been one of profound regard.

4. Select a person who represents a kind of greatness which appeals to you, and which you think will appeal to your reader. We are naturally interested in the lives of those persons who have got well on toward the top of that particular hill that we happen to be climbing. But the great hill that we are all climbing is life itself, and a sufficiently skillful biographer can make his work appeal to all classes of readers.

5. Choose a person, if possible, who is in some way connected with you, — a relative, a friend, a "man from home," a person to whom you feel in some way akin. Such a connection, if it does not give you some knowledge of your subject besides that in books, will at least increase your interest in reading the books, and will be likely to creep into your composition. If you really bestir yourself, you may be fortunate enough to find some old diary or a trunkful of letters which will form the nucleus of a

[1] Charles William Eliot, *John Gilley*, Boston, The Beacon Press. [Copyright, 1899.]

biography that will intensely interest you and, therefore, others.

41. Sources of Information. — The easiest sources to get at — dictionaries of biography — are unfortunately the least useful, except for matters of fact. They tell us when Thoreau was born, and what books he read; but they do not explain why his friends valued him, or why he achieved success in his chosen field. You must get closer to your subject than you ever can by reading the mere externals of his life. Use, therefore,

BOOKS

(*a*) The works of the person about whom you are writing.

(*b*) Letters to and from him.

(*c*) His diary or journal, if there is one.

(*d*) Books, diaries, or letters of those associated with him.

(*e*) Other biographies of him. (Very likely you may have to begin here instead of doing much with the four preceding classes of material; if so, choose full, fair accounts, and if possible read not only more than one account, but more than one side.)

(*f*) The histories of his town, county, or state; books on his period or profession. Try to find out what the members of his own calling thought of him.

PERIODICALS

(*a*) Magazine articles.

(*b*) Newspapers (if you have time).

In using periodicals you will have to expect more haste and prejudice than are ordinarily found in books.

Pictures and Relics

A portrait will sometimes tell us more than a book. What did the man look like when he was a boy? Have you seen his handwriting? Perhaps the house that he lived in is within a few miles of you. If so, visit it.

Tradition

Talk with old people about the past before it is too late.

42. Elements in Biography. — Although the three following elements are blended in good biography, the beginner ought to study them separately; and in a short biography, especially, he ought to be well content if he can make effective use of one of them, even at some cost to the others.

43. The Narrative Element. — It will be remembered that Margaret Ogilvie, in the delightful book of that name, so far overcame her prejudice against Robert Louis Stevenson that when absorbed in *Treasure Island* she refused to go to bed until she had seen "how that laddie got out of the barrel." In good biography there should often be this kind of interest, the kind that comes when the story of a life is told, not with attention to the mere dry fact or the descriptive setting, but with emphasis upon the point that here for the moment we have a little plot which, above everything else, makes us wonder what is coming next. This kind of interest attaches to President Eliot's account of the burning of John Gilley's smokehouse, and still more to the account of his death.[1] A masterly example of this element in biography is Bos-

[1] C. W. Eliot, *John Gilley*, pp. 55–58, 67–71. Other examples are to be found in *College Readings*, 437 ff. and 442 ff.

well's famous account of the meeting between Dr. Johnson and Wilkes: how Boswell craftily persuaded the Doctor to accept the invitation; how Mrs. Williams nearly spoiled everything by her unwillingness to let the Doctor go; how Johnson was at first embarrassed and surly when he found that Mr. Wilkes was one of the company; how Mr. Wilkes "gained upon him insensibly" by plying the Doctor with some delicious brown veal and gravy; and how, before the evening was over, Wilkes and the Doctor were making fun of Boswell, — all this is a great piece not so much of analysis or description as of narrative.

44. The Descriptive Element. — Thomas Carlyle, a great historian and a great biographer, is a notable example of a writer who when puzzled by other evidence would earnestly study from the best portrait he could find the face of the person that he was writing about. Therein, he thought, he could find the answer to many of his doubts. A skillful biographer — and of this also Carlyle is an example — will try to do for his readers as much as he can of what those portraits have done for him. Thus Carlyle, writing about Luther in *Heroes and Hero Worship*, says: "Luther's face is to me expressive of him: in Kranach's best portraits I find the true Luther." Carlyle then goes on to represent in words the effect upon him of Kranach's portrait as follows: "A rude plebeian face; with its huge crag-like brows and bones, the emblem of rugged energy; at first, almost a repulsive face. Yet in the eyes especially there is a wild silent sorrow; an unnameable melancholy, the element of all gentle and fine affections; giving to the rest the true stamp of nobleness."

45. The Analytical Element. — To say that there must be an analytical element in biography sounds like

making much more difficult a kind of writing which might otherwise be rather pleasantly compounded out of narrative and description. In reality, however, the task of the writer of biography, and particularly of short biography, is immensely simplified when he perceives the importance of this analytical element. For clearly any one who in a thousand words attempts to give an impression of the career of a notable man or woman must reject or merely summarize by far the greater part of the material available; and yet he must not do this without some principle in mind. How can he be sure that the relatively small number of dates or any other kind of biographical facts which he sets down are important? He must decide this by asking what his subject really represents, what is the thing, above all others, which that person accomplished in the world, or tried to accomplish, what is the dominant passion within him, or, perhaps, what two contradictory passions struggled in him for the mastery. Having answered these questions, the writer of biography has a unifying principle. He no longer includes a bit of material merely because it amuses him, or rejects something else because it does not interest him. He sees, perhaps, that the great contribution of a certain person was in improving the condition of inmates of English prisons. Therefore, being obliged to leave out many things, he leaves out most of what does not bear upon this one point, and emphasizes that point throughout his biography. In consequence, he gives a unified impression of that career. The analytical element assists the biographer, therefore, in that it gives him a test whereby he rejects or subordinates that which does not particularly aid him in unifying his subject.

To show how careful, successful portraits of people are drawn with this idea of unity in mind, let us turn to an essay published by Bishop Hall in 1608. He is writing "Of a Valiant Man": not any individual valiant man, but this class of human beings in general. Of the typical valiant man he says: "He undertakes without rashness, and performs without fear; he seeks not for dangers, but, when they find him, he bears them over with courage, with success. He hath ofttimes looked death in the face, and passed by it with a smile; and when he sees he must yield, doth at once welcome and contemn it." And so on, for more than a page, with other details which characterize the valiant man as a type. In other words, Bishop Hall finds that some valiant men are tall, some short, some fat, some thin, some rich, some poor, and so on; but he ignores these things in order that he may bring out emphatically the points wherein all valiant men differ from those who are not valiant.

Turn now to Dr. Johnson, and notice what he says about that worthy but dull old gentleman, Polonius, in *Hamlet:*

Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident of his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining to dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it has become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in fore-

sight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. *The idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius.*

Notice that this final sentence is as utterly a topic-sentence for the paragraph as any in the most strictly unified expository paragraph ever written. We get unity in biography, therefore, not by limiting ourselves to one man's career and by seeing that his friends are incidentally mentioned rather than allowed to loom up as principal figures, but by seeing a ruling ambition or quality in the career of that person, and by directing the attention of the reader to the fact that it predominates in what would without it be an almost meaningless succession of events.

One of the best recent examples of the analytical biography is Bryce's *Studies in Contemporary Biography*. Let us analyze one of his sketches, — that of Archbishop Tait. Instead of beginning with the statement that Tait was born at a certain place, in a certain year, Bryce begins with two paragraphs on the increased power and influence of a bishop in the English church in Tait's time. He next goes on to show that what is true of a bishop is truer still of an archbishop. Then, with only the slightest emphasis upon dates and external events, he carries Tait through the early period of his life before he becomes bishop. He points out that Tait was not, while he was a master at Rugby, considered a very great man. Then he goes on to ask

why it is that Tait has become a kind of pattern of what an archbishop ought to be, and he answers his own question by saying that Tait's greatness was due "to the statesmanlike quality of his mind." This generalization he supports by the following analysis:

He had not merely moderation, but what, though often confounded with moderation, is something rarer and better, a steady balance of mind. He was carried about by no winds of doctrine. He seldom yielded to impulses, and was never so seduced by any one theory as to lose sight of other views and conditions which had to be regarded. He was, I think, the first man of Scottish birth who ever rose to be Primate of England, and he had the cautious self-restraint which is deemed characteristic of his nation. He knew how to be dignified without assumption, firm without vehemence, prudent without timidity, judicious without coldness. He was, above all things, a singularly just man, who recognised every one's rights, and did not seek to overbear them by an exercise of authority. He was as ready to listen to his opponents as to his friends. Indeed, he so held himself as to appear to have no opponents, but to be rather a judge before whom different advocates were stating their respective cases, than a leader seeking to make his own views or his own party prevail. Genial he could hardly be called, for there was little warmth, little display of emotion, in his manner; and the clergy noted, at least in his earlier episcopal days, a touch of the headmaster in his way of receiving them. But he was simple and kindly, capable of seeing the humorous side of things, desiring to believe the good rather than the evil, and to lead people instead of driving them. With all his caution he was direct and straightforward, saying no more than was necessary, but saying nothing he had occasion to be ashamed of. He sometimes made mistakes, but they were not mistakes of the heart, and, being free from vanity or self-conceit, he was willing in his quiet way to admit them and to alter his course

accordingly. So his character by degrees gained upon the nation, and so even ecclesiastical partisanship, proverbially more bitter than political, because it springs from deeper wells of feeling, grew to respect and spare him.

Similarly Mr. A. C. Benson,[1] writing on "The Late Master of Trinity" (Dr. W. H. Thompson, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, England) says:

> In a life where events are rare . . . there can be little to record, unless there has been some definite *line* taken throughout, some marked attitude which a nature has consistently maintained towards the outer world.
>
> In the case of the late Master of Trinity we can lay our finger at once upon the characteristic which made him what he was. . . . He stood to the action and thought of the present day in the character of a judge.

Clearly this is not narrative or description; yet it gives us — as neither narrative without comment nor description without comment could possibly do — the clue to a career. Whatever experience you may have to slight, therefore, do not, especially in a short biography, ignore the importance of telling us not merely what the person looked like and what he did, but what his greatest point of strength or weakness was, what he chiefly tried to do, what qualities his friends principally valued in him, what permanent effect he made by his life.

46. Two Dangers to Avoid. — Biography may so easily be injured by *prejudice* and by *misinterpretation* that a word of warning against them is necessary at this point.

Prejudice. — Prejudice may easily take the form of *eulogy*, as it does in the obituary notice of the country

[1] *Essays*, New York, Macmillan, 1896, p. 239.

newspaper, or in the oration of the well-meaning but uncritical admirer. We all know that in such a notice a perfectly commonplace local character is bespattered with such eulogy as rightfully belongs to only two or three persons in a century. Big words are used for small things, and either ignorance or wilful exaggeration confuses moderate ability with genius. Words cease to mean anything when they are tossed about with such carelessness.

Equally objectionable, and probably more harmful, is *hostile prejudice*. When Macaulay, an ardent Whig, reviews an edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* by John Wilson Croker, a Tory, and finds it "ill-compiled, ill-arranged, ill-expressed, and ill-printed," he gives the book punishment which it did not deserve, and would not have received if Croker and Macaulay had belonged to the same political party. Prejudices of religion, race, or nation often have the same effect. In undergraduate composition the danger is not so much to the reputation of the person written about as to the temperament of the writer: to lose one's sense of justice, or even to get into the habit of frequently suspending it in order to make a telling hit, is a fault more serious than any merely rhetorical blunder.

Misinterpretation. — A subtler danger, perhaps, is that of reading in something which is really not in the text, of criticizing some one for not doing that which he never tried to do and could not be expected to do, of judging him by our time rather than by his own. Suppose, for instance, that I am writing a life of Cotton Mather, a Boston minister almost contemporary with Daniel Defoe. I find that he believed in the guilt of the so-called "Salem witches." Shall I, therefore, pronounce him ignorant and cruel? Before I do so, I ought to ask

whether educated persons of Cotton Mather's time generally believed in witches. Upon looking up the matter, I find that they did. Therefore, my judgment, though it may take other matters into account, must in part be based upon the standard of Cotton Mather's day.

To be reminded that beliefs and customs unlike those of ourselves, our neighborhood, our church, our party, our country, or our century, are not necessarily wicked or even amusing is one of the purposes for which we go to school and college.

EXERCISES

1. A unified sketch of a person in whom one trait is more prominent than any other (such as a bashful person, a superstitious person, an absent-minded person).

2. An incident in the life of an actual person showing character. (But do not rub in the lesson: tuck it away between the lines.)

3. An incident in a person's life told as a short narrative, with emphasis on the uncertainty of the outcome.

4. "Let any one who believes that an ordinary man can write a great biography make the experiment himself. I would have him try to describe the most interesting dinner-party at which he was ever present: let him try to write down from memory a few of the good things which were said, not forgetting to make an incidental allusion to the good things that were eaten; let him aim at what I may call the dramatic effect of the party. And then let him compare the result with Boswell's account of the famous dinner at Mr. Dilly's, the bookseller in the Poultry, where Johnson was first introduced to Wilkes, and he will begin to understand the nature of Boswell's genius." This extract is from Benjamin Jowett's *Life and Letters*, II, 33. (For Boswell's account, see Copeland and Hersey, *Representative Biographies*, pages 261–271; or Hill's edition of Boswell's *Johnson*, Vol. III, pages 64–79.)

5. A paragraph explaining the success or failure of some one by his strongest or weakest trait.

6. A portrait in which description brings out character. (But observe the warning given under Exercise 2.)

7. A report on the best books and best magazine articles about a person whose biography you propose to write. Consider, in making up this list:

(*a*) the author's relation to his subject,

(*b*) the extent of his information,

(*c*) his freedom from prejudice,

(*d*) the fullness with which he illustrates his work by means of portraits, facsimiles, etc.

8. Read the prefaces to two good biographies and report on (*a*) the thoroughness with which the subject has been studied, (*b*) the attitude of the biographer toward other biographers, and (*c*) his special purpose in writing.

9. Reduce to a single unified paragraph the gist of Bryce's "Goldwin Smith" (*College Readings*, pages 149 ff.).

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING REPORTS AND THESES

47. Qualities of Style. — The qualities which the writer of a report or thesis should have especially in mind are clearness, accuracy, brevity, and force. A report should be so clear, both in construction and in expression, that the reader will not be obliged to reread it. Clearness and accuracy are of the first importance, and these should not be sacrificed for the sake of brevity. But brevity is the next important quality, and a writer should devise means of making his ideas clear in the shortest possible space. Furthermore, if he can write forcible sentences which keep the attention and which make points stick in the mind, his writing will be even more efficient.

48. Structure. — A report or thesis should be composed according to the regular principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis. Special problems of construction will arise, according to the particular problems of the thesis. Some theses give an historical account of certain facts and would naturally be arranged in a chronological order; others analyze a complicated set of conditions, all existing at the same time; others are argumentative and aim to convince the reader of the writer's interpretation of facts. The student must choose whatever method of arrangement is most natural under the circumstances, and most intelligible to the reader. Whatever the method of structure, the student should keep the reader's attention by the use of brief announcements of method and by summaries.

49. Table of Contents. — A report or thesis should be regarded as a book. It should set out to make a distinct point or set of points, concerning which the reader should have no doubt when he has finished reading it. It should also aim to let the reader know as early as possible the purpose, plan, and method of the writer. Accordingly, a table of contents should be prefixed to every report or thesis. This table of contents should be arranged in correlated form; that is, the main divisions and the chief subheadings, and what other important points are necessary, should be arranged in the form of an outline, with numbers and letters, and the page numbers should be given on which these points are discussed. Such a table of contents is very valuable in keeping the writer on the main track, and is most helpful to a reader.

50. Paragraphs. — The matter of paragraphing deserves special attention. The length of paragraphs is

dependent on the nature of the thesis. Paragraphs should not be fragmentary groups of a few sentences. A paragraph represents a distinct step onward. The use of topic-sentences at the beginning of paragraphs and of summaries at the end is essential. The relation of each paragraph to what has gone before should be made clear. It is not necessary to employ artificial and mechanical connective phrases for this purpose. The expression of the vital connection of the thought itself is all that is needful. In case a series of paragraphs represents various subheadings of a certain point, it is frequently helpful to number them, so that the reader can see quickly their relation to each other.

51. Sentences. — Theses are often unsatisfactory on account of bad sentence structure. Sentences must first of all be grammatical, idiomatic, and correctly punctuated. Great care should be taken that each sentence is a unit in thought and expression. Straggling and incoherent sentences are fatal. Students should aim to form a neat, trim, compact style.

52. Technical Terms. — It is to be expected that a man will employ the technical terms and phrases commonly used by writers on his subject. But the privilege of using these shorthand technical expressions carries with it the obligation of using them accurately. If a writer thinks that his reader may have any doubt as to the meaning of technical words, he should carefully explain the sense in which he uses them.

53. Footnotes. — A thesis should be equipped with footnotes which give exact references to books from which the student has borrowed ideas or language. These footnotes, which should be placed at the bottom

of the page, should contain: first, the name of the author; second, the title; third, the volume and page; fourth, the place and date of publication. It is not acceptable to give a list of references on the first or last page of a thesis and merely refer to these by figures throughout the text. For various models of footnotes referring to books, articles, and periodicals, see § 318.

CHAPTER III

ARGUMENT

54. Value of Argument. — No one, in the words of Henry V, need " sheathe his sword for lack of argument." As long as men have conflicting beliefs and opinions about facts, political measures, or international affairs, they will engage in disputes. At certain periods of the world's history, nations are plunged into controversy, and debate in courts and parliaments flames into the furious debate of the battle field. The study of the principles of argument is not only of absorbing interest, but of the most vital importance. How shall we steer our way through the flood of assertion, recrimination, evidence, refutation, charge, and countercharge which during our time has burst from the presses of every great capital? Never before in the history of the world have governments so completely taken the public into their confidence by the publication of all sorts of official documents, treaties, diplomatic correspondence, reports of commissions, speeches, and letters. Recall the White Paper of Great Britain, the Grey Paper of Belgium, the Yellow Paper of France, the Orange Paper of Russia, the Red Paper of Austria. Notes between the United States and Germany were printed in the newspapers and in the *New York Times Current History.* Never before has the public had so much evidence in its possession.

How are we to find the truth for ourselves? How are we to convince others that our idea of the truth is correct? How are we to persuade others to accept our belief and act upon it? These are the aims of argument. An argument is the endeavor to make other people believe, and act in accordance with, our view of the facts. Our task is more difficult here than in Exposition, for when we explain we take it for granted that there is only one view of the matter, but when we argue we realize that other people hold other views. If I explain "Why I am a Republican" I write exposition. But if I so handle the subject that I make other people accept the principles of the Republican party and vote for its candidate, I make an argument.

55. Conviction and Persuasion. — Success in argument is founded on the use of both conviction and persuasion. Conviction appeals to the reason; persuasion to the emotions, ideals, interests, and motives of men. Thus argument has a twofold nature. It is not enough to convince a man's intellect. His feelings must be warmed, his sense of duty or love of country quickened, his passion for justice aroused. Though conviction and persuasion are both necessary, one or the other may be predominant, according to the kind of argument.

56. Kinds of Argument. — Arguments are divided into two kinds: arguments of fact and arguments of policy. Arguments of fact try to prove that certain things are true.[1] Arguments of policy try to show that certain things should be done.[2] In the first class fall arguments

[1] There are arguments of fact worth study in *College Readings*, 276 and 291.

[2] For examples see *College Readings*, 223 ff., 259 ff., 308 ff., and 330 ff.

made in courts of law, and arguments about historical or literary or scientific questions. In cases like these conviction is more important than persuasion: the attempt to establish the truth about facts appeals primarily to the intellect. Arguments of policy, on the other hand, deal with various moral, social, and political questions: they try to show that conditions should be changed or new principles or methods adopted. Here persuasion is of great importance, for men must be induced to take action.

57. Evidence. — To be successful an argument must be supported by proof, which consists of all the facts, illustrations, statistics, examples, and inferences "which serve to convince the mind of the truth or falsehood of a fact or proposition."[1] Each detail of proof is called evidence. The absence of evidence causes an argument to be mere assertion, and consequently worthless.[2] In attempting to prove any proposition, we may bring forward testimonial or direct evidence drawn from people who testify from their own knowledge, experience, or observation; or we may bring forward circumstantial or indirect evidence, which comes through reasoning from other facts which have been already established. Huxley makes the distinction between testimonial and circumstantial evidence very clear, and explains why circumstantial evidence is often of greater value than direct evidence.

By testimonial evidence I mean human testimony; and by circumstantial evidence I mean evidence which is not human testimony. Let me illustrate by a familiar example what I

[1] Best *On Evidence*, p. 5.

[2] For examples of evidence well used see *College Readings*, 223, 241, 257, and 296.

understand by these two kinds of evidence, and what is to be said respecting their value.

Suppose that a man tells you that he saw a person strike another and kill him; that is testimonial evidence of the fact of murder. But it is possible to have circumstantial evidence of the fact of murder; that is to say, you may find a man dying with a wound upon his head having exactly the form and character of the wound which is made by an axe, and, with due care in taking surrounding circumstances into account, you may conclude with the utmost certainty that the man has been murdered; that his death is the consequence of a blow inflicted by another man with that implement. We are very much in the habit of considering circumstantial evidence as of less value than testimonial evidence, and it may be that, where the circumstances are not perfectly clear and intelligible, it is a dangerous and unsafe kind of evidence; but it must not be forgotten that, in many cases, circumstantial evidence is quite as conclusive as testimonial evidence, and that, not unfrequently, it is a great deal weightier than testimonial evidence. For example, take the case to which I referred just now. The circumstantial evidence may be better and more convincing than the testimonial evidence; for it may be impossible, under the conditions that I have defined, to suppose that the man met his death from any cause but the violent blow of an axe wielded by another man. The circumstantial evidence in favor of a murder having been committed, in that case, is as complete and convincing as evidence can be. It is evidence which is open to no doubt and to no falsification. But the testimony of a witness is open to multitudinous doubts. He may have been mistaken. He may have been actuated by malice. It has constantly happened that even an accurate man has declared that a thing has happened in this, that, or the other way, when a careful analysis of the circumstantial evidence has shown that it did not happen in that way, but in some other way.[1]

[1] T. H. Huxley, "Lectures on Evolution," in *American Addresses.*

58. Tests of Evidence. — Only that evidence is useful which carries conviction. In order to test the value of evidence we must take several things into consideration.

1. *Consistency.* — We must make sure that a piece of evidence is consistent with itself, with other evidence and known facts which we have given, and with human experience and judgment.

2. *Source.* — We must make sure that the source of our evidence is reliable.[1] To establish this we should use four tests, which hold good whether we are examining *facts*, or *opinions* stated by authorities.

(*a*) Is the witness habitually truthful?

(*b*) Is the witness in a position to obtain correct information?

(*c*) Has the witness had the proper training to understand what he observes?

(*d*) Has the witness any personal interests, prejudices, or sympathies which would be liable to warp his testimony?

59. Argument from Authority. — Often our witness is an expert, an authority on a certain subject. His opinion is valuable because it is the opinion of a man who is recognized to have complete mastery and knowledge of his field. The tests to apply to an authority are:

1. Is he competent to give expert testimony in the kind of case that is being considered? A few practical tests of his competence may be mentioned. Look him up in *Who's Who;* find out what degrees he has, what learned societies he belongs to, what other honors he has received; find out what books he has written on the subject, and how recent the dates of publication are.

[1] Cf. Godkin on Huxley as an authority (*College Readings*, 248).

2. Has he had an opportunity to examine the case in question?

3. Is he free from prejudice in the present case? Naturally, prejudice or the possibility of personal gain or loss disqualifies him. Reluctant testimony and testimony the significance of which the witness does not perceive are particularly valuable.

Even though an expert witness meet all these tests, what he says will carry little weight if

a. He is contradicted by another authority of equal standing. Furthermore, the value of his testimony will be seriously impaired if he is contradicted by a number of authorities of lesser standing.

b. He is unknown to the audience.

60. Collecting Evidence. — You may gather evidence in many ways.[1] The various sources of evidence may be enumerated as follows: (1) personal knowledge; (2) personal interviews; (3) personal letters; (4) current periodicals; (5) standard encyclopedias, and books by experts and authorities on special subjects; (6) special documents, such as reports and documents issued by governmental authority.

In the course of your reading you should record your notes about evidence in a systematic way, so that they may be always at hand. The following directions will prove helpful:

1. Use small cards of uniform size.
2. Record only one fact on each card.
3. Give an exact reference to the source of the evidence at the bottom of the card.

You will then be able to spread the cards on your desk,

[1] See Chap. I (Gathering and Weighing Material).

sort them, rearrange them, and thus build the
your argument in a way that is as interesting as

61. Inductive and Deductive Reasoning. — It was pointed out above (§ 57) that we might also support our contentions by reasoning from other facts which have been already established. The processes of reasoning are brilliantly explained and illustrated by Huxley as follows:

> Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind, though differing of course in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.
>
> A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple, — you take up one, and, on biting it, you find it is sour; you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green, and sour. The shopman offers you a third; but, before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those that you have already tried.
>
> Nothing can be more simple than that, you think; but if you will take the trouble to analyse and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place you have performed the operation of induction. You found that in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It is so in the first case, and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from; you generalise the facts, and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law that all hard and green apples are sour; and that, so far as it goes, is a perfect induction. Well, having got your natural law in this way, when you are offered another

apple which you find is hard and green, you say, "All hard and green apples are sour; this apple is hard and green, therefore this apple is sour." That train of reasoning is what logicians call a syllogism, and has all its various parts and terms, — its major premiss, its minor premiss, and its conclusion. And, by the help of further reasoning, which, if drawn out, would have to be exhibited in two or three other syllogisms, you arrive at your final determination, "I will not have that apple." So that, you see, you have, in the first place, established a law by induction, and upon that you have founded a deduction, and reasoned out the special particular case. Well now, suppose, having got your conclusion of the law, that at some time afterwards, you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend: you will say to him, "It is a very curious thing, — but I find that all hard and green apples are sour!" Your friend says to you, "But how do you know that?" You at once reply, "Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so." Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an experimental verification. And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, "I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the same thing. It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America. In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject." Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn. He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are, — that the more frequently experiments have been made, and results of the same kind arrived at, — that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are attained, the more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further. He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of

conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result; and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it. . . .

So much, then, by way of proof that the method of establishing laws in science is exactly the same as that pursued in common life. Let us now turn to another matter (though really it is but another phase of the same question), and that is, the method by which, from the relations of certain phenomena, we prove that some stand in the position of causes towards the others.

I want to put the case clearly before you, and I will therefore show you what I mean by another familiar example. I will suppose that one of you, on coming down in the morning to the parlor of your house, finds that a tea-pot and some spoons which had been left in the room on the previous evening are gone, — the window is open, and you observe the mark of a dirty hand on the window-frame, and perhaps, in addition to that, you notice the impress of a hob-nailed shoe on the gravel outside. All these phenomena have struck your attention instantly, and before two seconds have passed you say, "Oh, somebody has broken open the window, entered the room, and run off with the spoons and the tea-pot!" That speech is out of your mouth in a moment. And you will probably add, "I know there has; I am quite sure of it!" You mean to say exactly what you know; but in reality you are giving expression to what is, in all essential particulars, an hypothesis. You do not *know* it at all; it is nothing but an hypothesis rapidly framed in your own mind. And it is an hypothesis founded on a long train of inductions and deductions.

What are those inductions and deductions, and how have you got at this hypothesis? You have observed in the first place, that the window is open; but by a train of reasoning involving many inductions and deductions, you have probably arrived long before at the general law — and a very good one it is — that windows do not open of themselves; and you there-

fore conclude that something has opened the window. A second general law that you have arrived at in the same way is, that tea-pots and spoons do not go out of a window spontaneously and you are satisfied that, as they are not now where you left them, they have been removed. In the third place, you look at the marks on the window-sill, and the shoe-marks outside, and you say that in all previous experience the former kind of mark has never been produced by anything else but the hand of a human being; and the same experience shows that no other animal but man at present wears shoes with hob-nails in them such as would produce the marks in the gravel. I do not know, even if we could discover any of those "missing links" that are talked about, that they would help us to any other conclusion! At any rate the law which states our present experience is strong enough for my present purpose. You next reach the conclusion that, as these kinds of marks have not been left by any other animal than man, or are liable to be formed in any other way than by a man's hand and shoe, the marks in question have been formed by a man in that way. You have, further, a general law, founded on observation and experience, and that, too, is, I am sorry to say, a very universal and unimpeachable one, — that some men are thieves; and you assume at once from all these premisses — and that is what constitutes your hypothesis — that the man who made the marks outside and on the window-sill opened the window, got into the room, and stole your tea-pot and spoons. You have now arrived at a *vera causa;* — you have assumed a cause which, it is plain, is competent to produce all the phenomena you have observed. You can explain all these phenomena only by the hypothesis of a thief. But that is a hypothetical conclusion, of the justice of which you have no absolute proof at all; it is only rendered highly probable by a series of inductive and deductive reasonings.[1]

[1] T. H. Huxley, "The Causes of the Phenomena of Organic Nature," in *Darwiniana.*

62. Fallacies. — There are only a few right ways of reasoning, but there are a great many wrong ways of reasoning, and it is impossible to classify them because it is impossible to classify infinity. A few of the most important errors in reasoning, called fallacies, are here mentioned in order that you may be able to detect flaws in your own argument and in your opponent's.

63. Begging the Question. — This fallacy consists in assuming without proof the truth of a point at issue. The most frequent form of this fallacy is called "arguing in a circle." This error lies in assuming the truth of a premise, then basing on this premise a conclusion, and then using this conclusion to prove the original premise. The following case of arguing in a circle is exposed by Professor Felix Adler:

> There is an argument in favor of child-labor so un-American and so inhuman that I am almost ashamed to quote it, and yet it has been used, and I fear it is secretly in the minds of some who would not openly stand for it. A manufacturer standing near the furnace of a glasshouse and pointing to a procession of young Slav boys who were carrying the glass on trays, remarked, "Look at their faces, and you will see that it is idle to take them from the glasshouse in order to give them an education; they are what they are, and will always remain what they are." He meant that there are some human beings — and these Slavs of the number — who are mentally irredeemable, so fast asleep intellectually that they cannot be awakened; designed by nature, therefore, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. This cruel and wicked thing was said of Slavs; it is the same thing which has been said from time immemorial by the slave-owners of their slaves. First they degrade human beings by denying them the opportunity to develop their better nature; no schools, no teaching, no freedom,

no outlook; and then, as if in mockery, they point to the degraded condition of their victims as a reason why they should never be allowed to escape from it.[1]

64. **Hasty Generalization.** — The error here consists in making an unwarranted or hasty generalization from an insufficient number of cases.[2] This fallacy may be exposed by showing that not enough cases have been observed to justify a conclusion about all other cases, or by showing that the cases which have been observed are not fair examples. (See the quotation from Huxley in § 61 above.)

65. **False Analogy.**[3] — This common error in reasoning consists in comparing two things which are similar only in a superficial way, that is, only in the one point for which we are comparing them, and then assuming that they are identical in all points. You should be constantly on guard against this fallacy. It appears very often in arguments of policy, in which the advocates of a new measure show that it ought to be adopted in a certain city or country because it has worked well in another city or country. This argument has no weight unless it is pointed out that the conditions — political, social, economic, etc. — in the two places compared are fundamentally similar. False analogy can be exposed by demonstrating that the points of likeness which are relied upon are outweighed by the points of difference which have been ignored. For example, take the statement that just as a man will become bankrupt if he buys

[1] *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. XXV, No. 3.

[2] Cf. *College Readings*, 276.

[3] In connection with this paragraph reread § 8 (analogies).

more than he sells, so a nation will become bankrupt if the value of its imports exceeds that of its exports. Webster in his *Speech on the Tariff* reveals the false analogy here. He shows that the case of the man is not like that of the nation, for when the value of imports exceeds that of exports, a debt is not created. The excess of imports over exports indicates the gains, not the losses, of trade.

66. Mistaken Causal Relation. — This fallacy consists in assuming without justification that two facts stand in the relation to each other of cause and effect simply because one fact is followed by the other.[1] The Latin name of this fallacy puts it compactly: *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (after this, therefore on account of it). Almost all superstitions are due to this fallacy — that is, to the lack of ability to distinguish a coincidence from a cause. You can expose a fallacy in arguing from effect to cause by showing (1) that the alleged cause was not sufficient to produce the effect; (2) that other causes intervened between the alleged cause and the effect; or (3) that the alleged cause was prevented from operating. President Eliot gives several examples:

> Many popular delusions are founded on the commonest of fallacies — this preceded that, therefore this caused that; or in shorter phrase, what preceded, caused. For example: I was sick; I took such and such a medicine and became well; therefore the medicine cured me. During the Civil War the Government issued many millions of paper money, and some men became very rich; therefore the way to make all men richer must be to issue from the Government presses an indefinite amount of paper money. . . . Bessemer steel is much cheaper now than it was twenty years ago; there has been a tariff tax

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, 241.

on Bessemer steel in the United States for the past twenty years; therefore the tax cheapened the steel. England, France, and Germany are civilized and prosperous nations; they have enormous public debts; therefore a public debt is a public blessing. He must carry Ithuriel's spear and wear stout armor who can always expose and resist this fallacy.[1]

67. Planning an Argument: Formal and Informal. — The chief steps in planning an argument are phrasing the proposition, analyzing the proposition, and proving the proposition. The thoroughness of the plan depends on whether you intend to treat the subject formally or informally. *Formal* treatment means covering the case fully and systematically, with careful regard to completeness of proof and refutation of opposing arguments. *Informal* treatment means dealing with the subject in a simpler, less thorough way. Informal argument aims to present opinions and to influence the opinions of other people, but does not engage in an exhaustive statement of proof. Informality, however, does not imply rambling or scattering arrangement: it merely suggests less rigid structure. First it is necessary to understand the method of constructing a formal argument.

68. Phrasing the Proposition. — Until you state the subject of the argument in the form of a definite proposition or question, you cannot begin to argue. When once you have chosen a subject that is interesting, one that is debatable (for there must be two sides to the question), and one on which the material is accessible, you should narrow down the proposition so that it will embody only a single idea; for instance, "Home Rule should be granted to Ire-

[1] C. W. Eliot, "Wherein Popular Education Has Failed," in *Five American Contributions to Civilization.*

land." You must not use a compound sentence, for thus the proposition would be double-headed. Furthermore, there should be no ambiguous words in the proposition, or terms so general that they may be taken in many senses, such as "Socialism," "Anarchism," "Trusts," "Policy," "Law." The proposition should be phrased in the affirmative, thus: "The New Zealand system of compulsory arbitration should be adopted in the United States." The reason for this is that the burden of proof rests on the affirmative. "He who affirms must prove." If the affirmative is not able to prove a case, the decision goes to the negative. Finally, the proposition should be phrased as simply and briefly as is consistent with clearness.

69. Analysis. — It is of vital importance to discover what the question means and what the main points at issue are. This is the work of analysis. We must cut our way to the pivotal points — those points which, if proved, will prove the proposition itself. Burke in his Conciliation Speech narrowed down the case to these two main issues:

1. Should England concede?
2. What should the concessions be? [1]

The process of analyzing the proposition to find the main issues consists, as a rule, of six steps:

1. The immediate origin of the question.
2. The history of the question.
3. The definition of terms.
4. The exclusion of admitted or irrelevant matter.
5. The conflicting contentions of the affirmative and the negative.
6. The statement of the main issues.

[1] See, for other examples, *College Readings*, 232–238 (especially p. 238), 239, and 260.

The order of these steps is not fixed: it varies according to the peculiar nature of the case. Sometimes the definitions are brought out in the history of the question; sometimes the definitions should precede the history of the question; sometimes the definitions and the history form parts of a preliminary exposition. The amount of historical material depends on the circumstances. The statement of the definitions and of the history should be so accurate and unprejudiced that both the affirmative and the negative may agree that it represents the facts truthfully. For the qualities of a good definition, see § 25. It is not necessary to define every word in the proposition; but it is essential that every term which admits of several meanings, or which is to be used in a special way, should be defined with rigorous exactitude. The object of drawing up the leading contentions of both sides in line of battle is to discover just which points are in sharp dispute. Other points both sides may agree upon and consequently may decide to omit; or it may be found that certain contentions are so trivial or irrelevant that they may be ruled out. The final step is to reduce the remaining contentions to as few main issues as possible, and phrase them as questions. Let us illustrate these steps by the analysis of the question, Should the North Atlantic navy yard activities be concentrated at a naval base on Narragansett Bay?

I. (Origin of the question.) Public interest in the question arises from the fact that the Secretary of the Navy has had for consideration two reports submitted by the Joint Army and Navy Board and by the General Board of the Navy recommending that

A. The navy yards at Portsmouth, Boston, and New York should be sold by the Government.

B. The activities of these navy yards should be consolidated at a great naval base to be established on Narragansett Bay.

C. This naval base on Narragansett Bay should be one of three such bases to be established on the Atlantic coast, the other two being at Norfolk, Virginia, and Guantanamo, Cuba.

II. (History of the question.) The question of concentrating the activities of the navy yards has been considered by experts in naval affairs for some years.

A. In the early eighties, a certain amount of consolidation was effected when William E. Chandler, Secretary of the Navy, transferred the work of the Boston Navy Yard to Portsmouth.

B. The development of the new navy before and after the Spanish War of 1898 has increased the need of efficiency and economy.

C. The Completion of the Panama Canal is bringing about far reaching changes in naval expansion and in the distribution of fleets:

1. The Canal enables a fleet to divide its time between the Atlantic and the Pacific.
2. It increases the importance of the South Atlantic bases and the Pacific bases.
3. It diminishes the importance of the North Atlantic navy yards.

III. (Definition of terms.) The following definitions are necessary in order to avoid misunderstanding:

A. A Navy Yard is a single establishment for docking, repair, and supply. It may include building and manufacturing facilities.[1]

[1] *General Order 135,* December 6, 1911.

B. A Naval Base is a point from which naval operations may be conducted. Its essential feature is an adequate anchorage for a fleet, sheltered from the sea and fortified against attack. A permanent base would have docking and repair facilities.[1]

C. The Industrial Establishment of a navy yard is that part of the equipment and activities of the yard which constitutes the industrial plant.

D. The Military Establishment of a navy yard is that part of its equipment and activities that is for strictly military purposes.

IV. (Excluded matter.) Both sides agree to exclude discussion of the proposed naval bases at Norfolk and Guantanamo.

V. (Clash of opinions.)

A. The affirmative contends that:

1. Navy yards exist for the navy and not the navy for the navy yards.
2. The opening of the Panama Canal offers great opportunities for the commercial expansion of Portsmouth, Boston, and New York.
3. The opening of the Panama Canal threatens the industrial welfare of the North Atlantic navy yards, in that it will cause those navy yards to suffer a decided loss in work and importance.
4. The concentration of the North Atlantic navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay will improve the military efficiency of the navy.
5. The concentration of the navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay will result in a substantial saving in the cost of maintenance, labor, and material.

[1] *General Order 135*, December 6, 1911.

B. The negative contends that:

1. The sale of the navy yards at Portsmouth, Boston, and New York would mean loss of business to those cities.
2. The concentration of the North Atlantic navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay would impair the military efficiency of the navy.
3. Such concentration would be extravagant in that large sums have been expended in building up an industrial plant at the present navy yards.
4. There is no guarantee that the work now performed at the three North Atlantic yards would be performed more cheaply when concentrated in one plant.

VI. (Main issues.) The question resolves itself into these main issues:

A. Would the sale of the Portsmouth, Boston, and New York navy yards be to the industrial advantage or disadvantage of those cities?

B. Would the concentration of the North Atlantic navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay promote or impair the military efficiency of the navy?

C. Would the concentration of the North Atlantic navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay result in an appreciable saving of expense?

70. The Brief. — The outline plan of an argument is called a brief. Like the plan of an exposition, it is composed of numbered headings and sub-headings.[1] (See the Rules for Making Plans, § 19.) But in the brief there are special methods of procedure which are necessitated by the fact that our chief purpose is to prove our

[1] See *College Readings*, 257, 306.

case. For example, each heading must be a complete statement with subject and predicate, in order that we may know exactly what fact is affirmed. Furthermore, each argumentative statement must be supported by evidence in the form of sub-headings, and these sub-headings in turn must be supported until we arrive at the solid wall of conviction, and need proceed no further. In a brief the order of writing is always "statement — proof," "statement — proof." Mechanical as this order is, it is the only one to insure absolute clearness. The special methods of procedure in drawing a brief are explained by a set of rules.

71. Rules for Briefing. —

Rule 1. A brief should be divided into three parts marked Introduction, Proof, and Conclusion.

Rule 2. Each heading should be a single complete statement: it should never be a compound sentence.

Rule 3. The relation of ideas in the brief should be indicated by numbers and letters, and by indentations.

Rule 4. In the Introduction the main headings should be the steps of analysis necessary for an intelligent reading of the Proof. (See the list of these steps and the illustrations of headings and sub-headings on p. 93.)

Rule 5. The last heading of the Introduction should state the main issues.

Rule 6. In the Introduction there should be no statements which require proof except the statements of the conflicting opinions. Since the Introduction is really an exposition, we should follow the rules for expository planning in § 19.

Rule 7. In the Proof, the main headings should correspond to the main issues at the end of the Introduction.

If there are two issues, there will be two main headings — I and II: if there are five issues, there will be five main headings — I, II, III, IV, V.

Rule 8. In the Proof, every sub-heading should read as proof of the truth of the heading to which it is subordinate. This is the vital rule of briefing, and it must never be forgotten. Note these illustrations from the brief for the affirmative on the question, "Should the North Atlantic navy yard activities be concentrated at a naval base on Narragansett Bay?"

II. Concentration of the North Atlantic navy yard activities at a naval base on Narragansett Bay would promote the military efficiency of the navy.

[Proof] *A.* Narragansett Bay has all the features required for a naval base by the specifications of naval experts.

[Proof] 1. It has an adequate anchorage for a fleet with all its auxiliaries, sheltered from sea.[1]

2. It can be made impregnable against attack.

[Proof] *a.* It has direct access to the open sea by broad and deep channels that give excellent opportunity for submarine and mine defense.

b. It is already defended by modern fortifications on the island midway of the entrance and on the flanking headlands.

3. It would not be possible for an enemy to bottle up any of our ships at this base.

[Proof] *a.* It would be impossible for an enemy to obstruct effectually such wide and deep channels.

[1] *United States Coast and Geodetic Survey (Chart) of Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island.*

b. An attempt to mine the entrance to the Bay would be foiled by submarines and countermining.

Observe that the sub-headings are not mere *explanation*, but are *proof* of the fact affirmed in the preceding heading. You must distinguish between a *possible cause* and *proof*. For example:

A. John went to bed at eight o'clock:
1. He was tired.

Here 1 is the *cause* of *A*, but it does not *prove A* by any means. In order to prove *A* you must have the testimony of someone who saw John go to bed at eight o'clock. The most effective way of keeping your mind on *proof* is to concentrate your attention on the *predicate* of your heading and *prove the fact residing in that predicate.* It is helpful, when you are making your first brief, to write the word " Proof " before each sub-heading, as in the illustration above. You do not need connective words at the end of headings, such as " for," " because," " hence," " therefore," for these connectives are liable to throw you off the straight track of " statement — proof."

Rule 9. Headings introducing refutation should state clearly the argument to be refuted. Refutation is the answering of contentions or objections which the other side may bring forward in connection with main arguments or details of proof. These objections should be answered when they arise. The form of heading should make it clear that you are answering your opponent's contention, thus:

A. The argument that the forests are increasing is not true:

1. The alleged increase consists of infant woods which will not mature for a century to come.

A. Although it is asserted that the forests are increasing, this is not true:
1. [as before].

Rule 10. The Conclusion should be merely a summary of the main arguments, followed by an affirmation or denial of the original proposition.

Rule 11. The brief should be equipped with references to sources of information in the form of footnotes. (See the example on p. 95 and read § 318 on Footnotes.)

72. Writing the Argument. — Now that you have a map of the analysis and the proof of your proposition, the work of writing the argument is more than half done. You should fill out the brief and make the result a readable article. The brief has excellent but rigid structure. In the argument you must not allow this structure to be so obvious that it becomes mechanical and "bony." Your reader must not feel that the argument is only a brief written out in long hand. What can you do to fill out the brief with flesh and blood? Many things. You can add detailed proof; you can give as many examples as you have space for; you can often put this illustrative matter in the form of brief narrative or descriptive passages; you can smooth out the rigid structure by the use of transitions; you can warm the whole argument by means of persuasion; but you must not put in mere padding. In the written argument you must not keep slavishly to the set order of "statement — proof," for this becomes very irritating. Frequently you can present the proof first and bring out last the state-

ment which the evidence proves. This method piques the curiosity. Again, it is often more diplomatic, especially if your audience has views opposed to yours. To come out flat with a statement and then gradually produce the evidence for it seems assertive until the demonstration had been completed. It will often be better to say "Let us see what the facts are and what conclusion they lead to."

A few words about the tone of your writing. Avoid a sarcastic treatment of your opponents or your audience. *Avoid any appearance of laying down the law.* Remember that if the subject is worth anything, it not only has two sides, but two sides almost evenly balanced. If you appear to be reaching a conclusion from which no sane man could conceivably differ, your hearers will be suspicious. They will wonder why this revelation of the truth for which others have anxiously sought has been made to you alone and not to your opponents. To escape this tone *get up your subject thoroughly* and then *lean on it hard.* There is no substitute for hard work in getting facts or for modesty and good sportsmanship in presenting them.[1]

73. Persuasion. — Persuasion, as was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, is that element in argument which rouses the hearer to action. It accomplishes its work by appealing to the emotions, to various personal interests, sympathies, prejudices, and motives. Persuasion is so powerful a force that it can win its way in the face of conviction. The following example shows how the National House of Representatives was once conquered by persuasion which appealed to sentiment.

[1] In the light of the foregoing suggestions consider the briefs and the finished arguments in *College Readings*, 257–271 and 306–323.

Sentiment versus utility was tried in the House to-day and sentiment won. It was all over the mistletoe. The proposition was to destroy it by remorseless scientific means, and the chivalry of the House was in arms. Arguments showing it to be a pernicious plant that killed trees were of no avail. It was permitted to stay in consideration of its otherwise tender influences. After a tree has become thoroughly inoculated with the poison of the mistletoe, Mr. Burleson declared, it invariably dies within seven years. Mr. Burleson asked that an item be inserted in the agricultural appropriation bill directing the forest service to determine whether there were any means to eradicate "this parasitical pest." He thus described it on the authority of statements made by the Audubon Society of Texas.

Mr. Gaines of Tennessee wanted to know if this was the mistletoe of romance and poetry. Asserting that there were too many shade trees anyhow, Mr. Gaines, with characteristic impulsiveness, sprang to the defence of the mistletoe, and pleading the influence of its gracious and hallowed memories, calling to his aid Dickens's immortal description of the Christmas Eve scene under the mistletoe in Mr. Wardell's kitchen, as given in "Pickwick Papers," succeeded in rescuing it from the grasp of the despoiler. Mr. Gaines offered the following effusion in poetical form. He laid it to a new member, and said it had been "tossed off" while the discussion, which lasted only fifteen minutes, was in progress. The lines read:

"What! Would they destroy thee, forgetting the part
So long thou hast played in affairs of the heart,
Forgetting the days of the dear long ago?
The loves that enshrine thee, thou dear mistletoe;
The beauties who dared and the gallants who won,
The romances dear that by thee were begun?
Then surely has gallantry faded from earth,
And departed forever life's pleasure and worth."

That settled it. The vote was 43 to 38 to let the mistletoe alone.[1]

[1] A full account is given in the *Congressional Record*, March 30, 1908.

Persuasion is often employed unscrupulously — a fact which should warn us of its dangers. It is incumbent on educated men to use this powerful weapon on the side of justice and right.

74. Methods of Persuasion. — Some of the most important methods of persuasion are as follows:

1. Win a hearing for yourself by shocking the audience into attention. When Woodrow Wilson, several years before he became President of the Unites States, received an honorary degree from Harvard, he was asked to speak at the Commencement dinner, which was held in Memorial Hall. This hall is a memorial of the Harvard men who fought for the Union in the Civil War. Mr. Wilson soon after beginning his speech said:

> I cannot help thinking, as I sit here in this hall, that it is dedicated to men who thrashed the men I most loved. I come from a more ancient Commonwealth than the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, namely, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I am one of those who are of the seed of that indomitable blood, planted in so many parts of the United States, which makes good fighting stuff, — the Scotch-Irish. The beauty about a Scotch-Irishman is that he not only thinks he is right, but knows he is right. And I have not departed from the faith of my ancestors.

This bold statement startled his audience into an attention which remained keen throughout his speech. Senator Lodge, speaking in the Senate on a resolution against foreign governments interfering with our trade, moved the addition of the words "and the lives of our citizens"; and in a superb sentence used anti-climax to gain a tremendous climax and shock his hearers into emotion:

"To me the dead body of a baby floating on the ocean, the victim of an unprovoked attack by a German submarine, is a more tragic spectacle than an — *unsold bale of cotton.*"

2. Adapt your point of view to the special interests, ideals, and intelligence of your audience. During the Civil War, Henry Ward Beecher was sent to England to speak on the side of the North in many industrial centres where sympathies were running strong for the South. At Liverpool, speaking against almost insuperable opposition, he made himself heard by appealing to the English love of fair play, and to the commercial interests of the manufacturers and the laboring men.

That nation is the best customer that is freest, because freedom works prosperity, industry, and wealth. Great Britain, then, aside from moral considerations, has a direct commercial and pecuniary interest in the liberty, civilization, and wealth of every nation on the globe. [Loud applause.] You also have an interest in this, because you are a moral and religious people. ["Oh, oh!" Laughter and applause.] You desire it from the highest motives; and godliness is profitable in all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come; but if there were no hereafter, and if man had no progress in this life, and if there were no question of civilization at all, it would be worth your while to protect civilization and liberty, merely as a commercial speculation. To evangelize has more than a moral and religious import — it comes back to temporal relations. Wherever a nation that is crushed, cramped, degraded under despotism is struggling to be free, you — Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Paisley — all have an interest that that nation should be free. When depressed and backward people demand that they may have a chance to rise — Hungary, Italy, Poland — it is a duty for humanity's sake, it is a duty for the highest moral motives, to sympathize with them;

but besides all these there is a material and an interested reason why you should sympathize with them. Pounds and pence join with conscience and with honor in this design.[1]

3. Appeal to the higher motives, and try to link the lower motives — such as self-interest, profit, pleasure — with the finer impulses, — generosity, self-sacrifice, love of right and justice, devotion to home and country. Few men have ever been so gifted with winning and persuasive speech as Abraham Lincoln. You should give days and nights to the study of his beautiful simplicity and sincerity, and his power of reaching out to nobler impulses. Here is his speech to the 166th Ohio Regiment:

I almost always feel inclined, when I happen to say anything to soldiers, to impress upon them, in a few brief remarks, the importance of success in this contest. It is not merely for to-day but for all time to come, that we should perpetuate for our children's children that great and free government which we have enjoyed all our lives. I beg you to remember this, not merely for my sake, but for yours. I happen, temporarily, to occupy this White House. I am a living witness that any one of your children may come here as my father's child has. It is in order that each one of you may have, through this free government which we have enjoyed, an open field and a fair chance for your industry, enterprise, and intelligence; that you may all have equal privileges in the race of life, with all its desirable human aspirations. It is for this the struggle should be maintained, that we may not lose our birthright — not only for one, but for two or three years. The nation is worth fighting for, to secure such an inestimable jewel.

4. Focus your persuasion on a definite objective. If you produce enthusiasm in your audience, you should

[1] Henry Ward Beecher, *Speech at Liverpool*, October 16, 1863.

direct it into action; if you do not, it will evaporate. A splendid example of persuasion to a definite purpose is the close of Senator Root's speech on the Panama Canal Tolls. He urged the United States to live up to its treaties with Great Britain to the effect that vessels of the United States should not be exempt from paying tolls.

O Senators, consider for a moment what it is that we are doing. We all love our country; we are all proud of its history; we are all full of hope and courage for its future; we love its good name; we desire for it that power among the nations of the earth which will enable it to accomplish still greater things for civilization than it has accomplished in its noble past. Shall we make ourselves in the minds of the world like unto the man who in his own community is marked as astute and cunning to get out of his obligations? Shall we make ourselves like unto the man who is known to be false to his agreements; false to his pledged word? Shall we have it understood the whole world over that "you must look out for the United States or she will get the advantage of you"?

It is worth while, Mr. President, to be a citizen of a great country, but size alone is not enough to make a country great. A country must be great in its ideals; it must be great-hearted; it must be noble; it must despise and reject all smallness and meanness; it must be faithful to its word; it must keep the faith of treaties; it must be faithful to its mission of civilization in order that it shall be truly great. It is because we believe that of our country that we are proud, aye, that the alien with the first step of his foot upon our soil is proud to be a part of this great democracy.

Let us put aside the idea of small, petty advantage; let us treat this situation and these obligations in our relation to this canal in that large way which befits a great nation.[1]

[1] Elihu Root, Speech in the United States Senate, in the *Congressional Record*, January 21, 1913.

75. Informal Argument. — The difference between formal and informal argument, as was pointed out in § 67, is largely a matter of thoroughness and tone. Since informal argument deals with a question in a simpler, less thorough way, it is usually much shorter. Examples of this kind of argument we read every day in the editorials of newspapers. In cases like this, a writer sometimes dispenses with an analytical introduction and treats only one or two main arguments; or perhaps gives his attention merely to analyzing a question in order to acquaint the public with the vital issues involved; or perhaps seizes an opportunity to arouse public feeling. For example, an editorial in the *Outlook* opens thus:

> Our object in this article is, first, to define the issue joined between the "open shop" and the "closed shop;" and, secondly, to give our judgment on that issue and the reasons upon which it is based.[1]

This statement expresses clearly the essential steps in all argument, and indicates as well the compactness and brevity with which the particular question is to be treated. Another editorial, this time in the *Independent*, begins crisply with the subject to be discussed:

> After the tariff — the currency, after the currency — the trusts, after the trusts — the Presidential primary. In his address to Congress last December President Wilson urged "the prompt enactment of legislation which will provide for primary elections throughout the country at which the voters of the several parties may choose their nominees for the Presidency without the intervention of nominating conventions." There

[1] *The Outlook*, July 16, 1904.

are indications that Mr. Wilson expects this to be the next big task which he will urge Congress to undertake.[1]

It then proceeds to support the Presidential primary by a series of paragraphs announced as follows:

The proposal for the direct nomination of candidates for the Presidency is based upon solid grounds.

It is a logical development. . . .

It is democracy. . . .

It is an instrument of representative government. . . .

It works well. . . .

In informal argument there is usually not time enough to give many details of evidence, but the contentions are supported by significant facts or justified by sound reasoning. As a result of brevity there is a gain in sharpness of impression and unity of effect. Furthermore, one of the distinguishing marks of informal argument is the greater part played by persuasion. Indeed, informal argument frequently has as its aim the desire to make people feel something or do something. Its appeal may be more direct and intimate than that of formal argument, and its tone and style may be more colloquial and spirited.

EXERCISES

1. Clip from newspapers examples of assertion.
2. Clip from newspapers examples of evidence.
3. Apply the tests of evidence (§ 58 of this book) to the arguments in *College Readings*, 257 and 276.
4. Copy into your notebook five examples of evidence in Lincoln's letters and speeches.

[1] *The Independent*, February 23, 1914. See *College Readings*, pages 336 ff. For other examples of informal argument, see *College Readings*, pages 221, 223, 324–336.

5. Find examples in daily life of inductive or deductive reasoning.

6. Clip from newspapers or advertisements examples of fallacies.

7. Criticize the flaws in the following arguments. Refute these arguments.

a. Examinations are useful as a preparation for life; for does not life confront us with a series of tests?

b. I don't think much of a college education. My father had none and is a successful man. My uncle went to college, and my father supports him.

c. The only people excluded from the privilege of voting are children, idiots, foreigners, convicts, and women. How much longer will the civilized nations of the earth permit their women to be classed with the incompetent and the criminal classes of society?

d. The rapid increase in wages for the past twenty years shows the superior advantage gained by the organization of the working men.

e. It is a poor way to entertain a girl to take her to the theatre, for if you pay attention to the girl you'll miss the play and might just as well have entertained her at home and saved your money, while if you pay attention to the play you'll neglect the girl and might as well have bought one ticket and gone alone.

f. Iowa is the best for farming of any of the states. Muscatine County is the best farming county in the state. My farm is the best farm in the county. Therefore, my farm is the best in the United States.

g. President Wilson should be reëlected, for the country has had an era of enormous prosperity since 1914.

8. Discuss the value of the proof in the following arguments:

a. Boston real estate owners will not suffer if Boston has no-license. As to real estate to be vacated by reason of a no-license vote, the experience of cities like Seattle and Denver is, that such real estate has been entirely taken up by legitimate

business within three months of a no-license law becoming operative.

b. "We want suffrage for peace," declares an advocate of suffrage and sufferer from war. But would we get it? Are not the women of the warring countries just as keen for war as the men? In England are not the women the most active recruiting sergeants? Even in this neutral country do not the women divide as sharply on lines of racial sympathy as their husbands and brothers?

Why can't this question of the ballot be discussed on its merits, without pretense that women's hearts and minds differ radically in their workings from the like organs in masculine frames? Women should have the ballot — if they should have it — because they are human beings and taxpayers and workers, not because they belong to a supposedly superior sex. Those who would give woman the ballot as a means of reforming society either don't know what they are talking about or are not talking about what they know. Intellectually and morally, women are neither better nor worse than men. If this be treason, we're glad of it.

9. Discuss the value of the arguments in this political advertisement:

WHAT THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CANDIDATES STAND FOR:

Administration of our Public Schools first, last, and all the time for the benefit of those who attend them.

The absolute and permanent separation of Politics from our Public School Administration.

The maintenance of the present schedule of salaries and

WHAT THE PRESENT SCHOOL COMMITTEE HAS STOOD FOR:

The purchase of a second-hand Packard automobile for $2500, whose maintenance cost, exclusive of chauffeur, has averaged $198 per month.

The consumption of 1200 gallons of gasoline for the operation of this car, which means that it must have been run

increases for teachers, janitors, and other school department employees.

The expenditure of *School Money* for School purposes, and FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES ONLY.

Strict adherence to the Merit System in the making of appointments and promotions.

The removal of all taint or suspicion of jobbery from the purchase of land to be used for School purposes.

Publicity for the doings of the School Board, and an opportunity for every member to attend all sub-committee meetings.

The holding of all meetings of the School Board or its sub-committees IN THIS CITY.

The extended use of School Buildings as Community Centers.

nearly 10,000 miles, more than three times across the United States, since June 4, 1915.

The charging to the city of bills for refreshments, some petty, others not so petty; some consumed in this city, most consumed elsewhere.

Favoritism in the appointment and promotion of teachers and employees. Relatives of the School Board have been first preferred; political workers or relatives of political workers have been second preferred. Faithful, conscientious teachers who have done their duty and kept out of politics have been consistently ignored.

Disregard of their own rules regulating appointment and promotion when some relative or friend, or relative of a friend, was to be served.

Utter disregard of ordinary business prudence, as illustrated by the far-famed $11,000 deficit with which the special committee on improved business methods ended their first year's administration.

10. Point out the errors in brief-drawing in these cases and indicate what the proper form should be:

A. Socrates went about asking questions trying to find out if he was wiser than any one else:

1. The Delphic oracle had said that he was the wisest of all men.
2. He wished to see in what way he was wiser than the other philosophers.

A. Capital punishment makes punishment uncertain:

1. Many eminent jurors agree that the severer the penalty the more likely the criminal is to be acquitted:

a. The number of executions compared with the number of well-authenticated cases of crime is small.

III. The United States did not undertake the Spanish-American War for territorial acquisition:

A. The United States still hold the Philippine Islands:

1. The inhabitants of these islands are not yet competent to govern themselves.

C. Under the republican form of government in China financial conditions have improved and social and administrative reforms have been pushed forward:

1. Social progress of the people has been great.

II. The republic in China will solve the problem of succession:

3. Yuan Shih Kai's own children are unfit to succeed him, therefore

a. It will be easy to get an elective strong man to succeed him.

B. In order to advance in medicine and surgery we must have new drugs and a greater knowledge which can only be gained through vivisection, hence

a. Vivisection is absolutely neeessary for the study and remedy of human diseases.

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2. Dr. Weir Mitchell practiced and endorsed vivisection, because

a. He believed in its value.

11. Construct the introduction of a brief from Huxley's *Three Hypotheses Respecting the History of Nature*, or A. S. Johnson's *Case against the Single Tax*. (Both in *College Readings*, pages 232–239.)

12. Brief any of these arguments in *College Readings:* E. D. Durand's *Council Government vs. Mayor Government;* Sir William Anson's *Defense of the House of Lords;* W. H. Taft's *Monroe Doctrine;* F. Franklin's *Intellectual Powers of Woman;* O. C. Barber's *Popular Control of National Wealth.*

13. Write a persuasive letter appealing for money for a charity.

14. Copy into your notebook five examples of persuasion in Lincoln's speeches.

15. What use of persuasion is made in the arguments in *College Readings*, 301, 304, and 308?

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION

76. Definition, Kinds, and Purposes. — Whereas Exposition tells how a thing works, Description tells how it looks. To tell how a thing looks may be a matter of explanation, or it may be a matter of arousing in the mind of the reader a certain general effect of amusement, gloom, rapture, or quiet enjoyment such as the thing described has aroused in the mind of the writer. If the purpose of the description is to instruct the reader in the precise details of an object, we call the description scientific. Such is the following paragraph from a considerably longer description of a building:[1]

It is about sixty-seven and one-half feet high to the top of the main roof and has one eighty-five feet centre aisle commanded by two ten-ton travelling cranes, and two thirty-nine feet side aisles with single five-ton cranes. The general design of the building conforms closely to advanced steel-shop construction in this country, but the details vary considerably from it in some of the important members. The wall columns, twenty-three feet apart, carry the side aisle roof trusses directly, and the centre-aisle columns, sixty-nine feet apart, carry riveted longitudinal trusses about fourteen feet deep, each of which supports two intermediate centre and side-aisle roof trusses, while every third roof truss is carried directly on the columns.

[1] Reprinted in full in *College Readings*, pages 375–376.

The centre-aisle columns are double with two H-shape shafts four and a half feet apart transversely, with their feet riveted between the webs of a single long, wide, structural-steel pedestal.

In the passage on page 125, however, the purpose of the writer was to imitate in words the general impression made upon him by Chartres Cathedral. In spite of the difference in purpose these are both more or less sustained descriptions. But small bits of description are used to flavor almost every kind of writing: to be able to describe a person vividly is important for the biographer; to set the scene, to describe the people, and to indicate the action which accompanies dialogue is necessary in order to make narrative real. Even exposition and argument, though their main purpose is far from being descriptive, make some use of description in a subordinate way.

77. Material. — The materials which we put into description come to us from one or more of three sources: from observation, from reading, and from imagination. If we take a piece of paper and a pencil, sit down in front of a building or a landscape or a picture on our walls, and glancing at the object from time to time, try to reproduce on paper the effect of what we see, we are describing from observation. Such a method, although it saves us at times from untruthfulness, and though it should furnish us with plenty of material, is not ordinarily so good as to describe from our recollections of actual observation. By observing carefully and then allowing a short interval to occur, we find that the less important details have become dim or have altogether disappeared, while the main points still stand out. It is a fair assumption that whatever a well-trained observer remembers most vividly will appeal most vividly to his reader.

Although every one wishes to be as original as possible in description as in other kinds of writing, a great deal is to be learned by reading the descriptions of others. Perhaps no writer has described precisely what I wish to describe; yet many have described something similar and have used words and devices which may be useful to me. Without copying from them anything which does not fully apply to my subject, I can get suggestions here and there. One of the great pleasures in reading such men as Stevenson and Mr. Kipling is the study of their swift and telling description.

In all description there is a further element, — the element of imagination. Daring writers like Poe occasionally go so far as to write long descriptions of imaginary scenes. Although this practice is not to be commended to beginners, yet even they should remember to flavor fact with imagination. Imagination is, indeed, in part made up by observation and reading strangely changed and recombined.

78. Use all of your Senses. — The mass of sensations which make up the reality of any moment consist of some which are immediate and vividly realized and others which are subordinate and hardly thought of until they cease. It is especially to be noted that these sensations are not by any means all visual impressions: sound, smell, touch, and taste all play their part. The camera merely sees what is within its range; a sensitive person feels things behind him, hears the whistle of a bird's wings overhead or sees its shadow on the ground, smells the new-cut hay or the freshly ploughed earth or the wood smoke, or perhaps the gentler odor of lavender or sandalwood. All this, in addition to what we see, makes up the

reality of any moment. If a writer of description forgets this, his description will lack the beauty and complexity of real life.

Anyone who doubts this may easily test the matter for himself. Let him take any moment which is descriptively rich, and let him temporarily deprive himself of sight; that is to say, let him close his eyes. He will find that a large part of the reality of the moment remains. Readers of *The Light that Failed* will remember that the hero, Dick Heldar, after he became blind, was taken out to the drill ground and that through other senses than sight he contrived to know what was going on. He heard, for example, the creaking of the leather slings as the bass drummer heaved up the big drum. They will also remember how, near the end of the book, Dick went down to the front on an armored train which had to use its quick-firing gun, and how the tinkle of the empty cartridge cases as they were thrown out of the breech of the gun and the reek of the powder smoke as it swept back into the car make in Kipling's hands an extremely vivid description, although nothing in it is visual.

79. Considering the Reader. — On account of the similarity between description and painting, the idea has become fixed in the minds of many people that when we describe a thing we make the reader see it. It is important to remember that we do not make the reader see it, nor do we expect to: when we say "an old gray house stood near the dusty road," we cause the reader to picture, from his own experience, an old gray house and a dusty road. A child who has spent all his life surrounded by pavements and brick buildings has very little material out of which to build this picture. Indeed, if he has

any at all, it is probably what he has read from books. Every one of us is more or less in this position in reading description. If a palace is described, we who have never seen a palace build up an idea of one curiously compounded of the most stately actual house that we have ever seen, plus some picture of a palace that we have come across, plus the *Arabian Nights* and a dozen other books more or less freshly and accurately remembered. The result may have no more relation to the kind of image the writer meant us to picture than our actual experiences have to the strange distortions of them which throng our dreams.

80. Unity. — Since your object in description is to make the reader share your sense impressions, and since the complete record of all details of sight, sound, odor, touch, and taste would be confusing, you should select only the significant details. The two most helpful devices to secure unity in description are Point of View and Dominant Tone. By means of the former you help your reader to make his mental reproduction of a scene true to place and time. By means of the latter you give him one chief impression.

81. Point of View.[1] — If I were to photograph a bit of landscape, I should walk about it and consider the best place to plant my camera. It would be important to have the light fall properly upon the object, to prevent some object in the foreground from shutting out something more important beyond it, and in general to get what we call a " good look " at the thing to be photographed. In other words, it would be necessary to select

[1] See *College Readings*, page 609, for a classification of possible points of view and references to examples of each.

the best "point of view." So it is in written description: I must be skillful in deciding upon my point of view and definite in announcing it. But description is different from photography in that the point of view may change. I may be coming into a harbor and as the steamer approaches the wharf I may jot down first a view of the harbor in the distance; a few moments later, the nearer view; and, finally, the detail visible only at short range. Or, in other cases, the object being described may approach me, and thus the effect may constantly change. In a single sentence Kipling describes the coach of an airship as it rises straight toward an observer looking down from far above it: "It enlarges rapidly from a postage-stamp to a playing-card, to a punt, and last a pontoon." Besides these changes in the position of the observer and of the object, there may be changes in the conditions — light or weather, for example — under which the object is seen. The light may gradually increase or diminish; a flash of lightning may suddenly reveal details previously hidden; the moon may rise; a fog may lift. Any one of a dozen perfectly natural changes may be used to make one view dissolve into another. If I am describing from observation — writing actually in the field — I am almost certain to be truthful to fact in my dealing with this matter of point of view. The difficulty comes when I describe a thing as I recollect it after a long interval, or when I imagine a view. In either of these cases I must be very careful to apply in every part of my description whatever conditions of light, weather, and physical point of view govern the rest of the description. If I am supposed to be describing a view from a certain window, I must not include certain objects if a particular tree would

hide those objects, or if the distance would prevent my seeing them distinctly.[1] I shall fail here if I jumble my recollection of a bit of country seen from all sorts of positions, under all sorts of weather conditions. I must either draw from life, or be essentially truthful to life if I draw from recollection or imagination. But this is not all: a certain landscape seen from the same point, under the same weather conditions, makes one effect upon a child and another upon his father; makes one effect upon a despondent person and another upon one whose mood is happy.[2] So we must add temperament as another condition which modifies the view.[3]

82. Dominant Tone. — It is evident that we are not cameras: we do not hold a piece of paper up to a landscape in order that everything within range may be mechanically printed upon it. We do our own selecting. We take into our own minds and give out again in the form of our own words the impression of those things which happen to strike us. Now, the mass of detail, even when I look out from my window upon a relatively barren view, is so great that in my description I really leave out almost everything that I see. The beginner may think that when he writes two or three pages of description he is including a great deal: but let him think for a moment of the enormous mass of detail that he is leaving out; then let him ask himself what the chances of success are if he has no principle to guide him in deciding

[1] In the light of this principle, examine the passages under § 133.

[2] See the first paragraph of "The Manse" in Stevenson's *Memories and Portraits.*

[3] See Stewart Edward White, "On the Wind at Night" (*College Readings,* 420).

what he shall leave out, what he shall subordinate, and what he shall throw into high relief. Of course, everything that we have said about point of view is to some extent a guide in the selection of material. But even after point of view has helped us all it can, we are still swamped with a great mass of material. Then there comes to our aid the principle of unity. Remembering always that what we describe is not the thing itself, but the impression which that thing makes upon us, we must ask ourselves what is the essence of that impression.

Perhaps the object to be described is a person; if so, does that person impress us most with his shabby respectability, or with the manifold evidences of newly acquired wealth, or with a devotion to study which has left him scant time to think of outward appearances? Perhaps it is a landscape; if so, could not the gist of it be conveyed to a reader if we regard it as primarily a study in white, or a study in autumn foliage, or a study in fog or heat or cold? Or perhaps it is a scene in which landscape, buildings, and people all play their part; if so, what is the feeling in the air? Is it jollity, or gloom? Entirely humdrum people, landscapes, and scenes which nothing seems to dominate are probably not good subjects for description. Certainly they are not good subjects for a beginner.[1]

Having selected our dominant tone, we decide what details will make that dominant tone most impressive, throw them into high relief, and subordinate or omit others. For example, suppose that I wish to describe

[1] See the selection from Irving in § 133 of this book. For other examples of dominant tone, see *College Readings*, 358, 369, 383, 399, 400 (Drake), 405–410.

the appearance of some young men in such a way as to emphasize very rapidly the fact that, though not in uniform, they are soldiers. There are many details about them which are common to soldiers and to civilians. These I ignore. The details which I emphasize are these — if I am as keen as Kipling:

> The line of the chin-strap, that still showed white and untanned on cheekbone and jaw, the steadfast young eyes puckered at the corners of the lids with much staring through red-hot sunshine, the slow, untroubled breathing, and the curious, crisp, curt speech.[1]

83. Coherence. — As in other kinds of writing, so in description it is important that the parts should stick together. Particularly in description there is a temptation to enumerate details in helter-skelter fashion instead of combining them coherently. The result is an inventory rather than a description. Coherence is essential if you wish your readers to have a strong impression of the way a scene affects you.

The most natural method of progression is to arrange the details in the order in which they impress themselves on your senses. As a rule you should give the most striking details first for the sake of producing your dominant tone. You may then bring in less striking details, and echo the chief impression at the end. In certain cases it may be best to begin with particulars and build up the general impression. Sometimes you may begin with things near at hand and proceed to those far away; sometimes you may begin with things at a distance and

[1] Kipling, "A Conference of the Powers." Quoted in J. H. Gardiner's *Forms of Prose Literature.*

CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

strokes he sums up the general impression, and uses a figure of speech, based on keen observation, which fills the eye with the effect of the whole — " a many-coloured quilt of little fields." Then he begins to paint in the details — the dark hedges, the road, the ridges of the hills, and (coming nearer) the trees clustered in the valley, the church tower, the spatter of cottages. He ends by quickly surveying the whole landscape — " grey farms spread on the sides of the Vale " — and by emphasizing the tower which " dominated all." This method is admirable, it is so natural. Note, too, how vividly the words picture the objects: " there spread the Vale," " a cradle under a many-coloured quilt," " the patchwork swept the valley and climbed the foothills," " hedges outlined," " a road dropped," " trees clustered," " amidst them sprang a granite tower," " a spatter of cottages," " thinned away," " lifted its shapely column."

In describing Chartres Cathedral, Henry James first expresses the dominant tone of the whole — " vertical effects " and " endless upward reach " — and then lets the eye climb in the most natural manner from the doors to the spires.

Like most French cathedrals, it rises straight out of the street, and is destitute of that setting of turf and trees and deaneries and canonries which contribute so largely to the impressiveness of the great English churches. . . . The little square that surrounds it is deplorably narrow, and you flatten your back against the opposite houses in the vain attempt to stand off and survey the towers. . . . There is, however, perhaps an advantage in being forced to stand so directly under them, for this position gives you an overwhelming impression of their height. I have seen, I suppose, churches as beautiful

as this one, but I do not remember ever to have been so fascinated by superpositions and vertical effects. The endless upward reach of the great west front, the clear, silvery tone of its surface, the way three or four magnificent features are made to occupy its serene expanse, its simplicity, majesty, and dignity — these things crowd upon one's sense with a force that makes the act of vision seem for the moment almost all of life. . . . Certainly there is an inexpressible harmony in the façade of Chartres.

The doors are rather low, as those of the English cathedrals are apt to be, but (standing three together) are set in a deep framework of sculpture — rows of arching grooves, filled with admirable little images, standing with their heels on each other's heads. . . . Above the triple portals is a vast round-topped window, in three divisions, of the grandest dimensions and the stateliest effect. Above this window is a circular aperture, of huge circumference, with a double row of sculptured spokes radiating from its centre and looking on its lofty field of stone as expansive and symbolic as if it were the wheel of Time itself. Higher still is a little gallery with a delicate balustrade, supported on a beautiful cornice and stretching across the front from tower to tower; and above this is a range of niched statues of kings — fifteen, I believe, in number. Above the statues is a gable, with an image of the Virgin and Child on its front, and another of Christ on its apex. In the relation of all these parts there is such a high felicity that while on the one side the eye rests on a great many large blanks there is no approach on the other to poverty. . . . The two great towers of the cathedral are among the noblest of their kind. They rise in solid simplicity to a height as great as the eye often troubles itself to travel, and then suddenly they begin to execute a magnificent series of feats in architectural gymnastics. This is especially true of the northern spire, which is a late creation, dating from the sixteenth century. The other is relatively quiet; but its companion is a sort of tapering bouquet of sculptured stone.

Statues and buttresses, gargoyles, arabesques, and crockets pile themselves in successive stages, until the eye loses the sense of everything but a sort of architectural lacework.[1]

Compare this description with the picture, and study the choice of words — both those that give swift impressions of broad aspects and those that picture specific details. Note particularly the happy use of figures — " the wheel of Time," " a tapering bouquet of sculptured stone," " architectural lacework."

When a landscape is extended or complicated, one of the best ways of indicating the relative position of details is to use what is called a " fundamental image " — that is, a familiar figure which depicts the shape or form of a place. Look for a few moments at the picture of the Bay of Monterey and think of a good comparison which suggests its shape. Then read Stevenson's description and see how effective is General Sherman's figure of the bent fishing-hook, and how skillfully Stevenson arranges the details with reference to this image.

The Bay of Monterey has been compared by no less a person than General Sherman to a bent fishing-hook; and the comparison, if less important than the march through Georgia, still shows the eye of a soldier for topography. Santa Cruz sits exposed at the shank; the mouth of the Salinas River is at the middle of the bend; and Monterey itself is cosily ensconced beside the barb. Thus the ancient capital of California faces across the bay, while the Pacific Ocean, though hidden by low hills and forests, bombards her left flank and rear with never-dying surf. In front of the town, the long line of sea-beach trends north and northwest, and then westward to enclose the bay. The waves which lap so quietly about the jetties of Mon-

[1] Henry James, "Chartres," in *Portraits of Places.*

terey grow louder and larger in the distance; you can see the breakers leaping high and white by day; at night, the outline of the shore is traced in transparent silver by the moonlight and the flying foam; and from all round, even in quiet weather, the low, distant, thrilling roar of the Pacific hangs over the coast and the adjacent country like smoke above a battle. . . .

Inshore, a tract of sand-hills borders on the beach. . . . The crouching, hardy live-oaks flourish singly or in thickets — the kind of wood for murderers to crawl among — and here and there the skirts of the forest extend downward from the hills with a floor of turf and long aisles of pine-trees hung with Spaniard's Beard.[1]

There are many examples of "fundamental image." Thoreau compares Cape Cod to a bended arm;[2] Wordsworth, the valleys of the Lake Country to the spokes of a wheel;[3] Victor Hugo, the field of Waterloo to the letter A.

Turn next to the picture of the Palace of Fine Arts at the San Francisco Exposition. Observe the details minutely, think out an effective order to use, then write a description with attention to order and vivid phrasing. Finally compare your description with this:

Sweeping in a great arc around the western shore of the lagoon, the Palace, in the architect's view, is merely a background for the water, the trees and the plants on the terraced walls and pergolas. Certainly it is a beautiful setting to a beautiful scene. So perfectly are the Palace and its foreground fitted to each other that the structure looks as though it might have stood there for twenty centuries, a well-preserved Roman villa, while generations of trees grew, and decayed, and were reproduced around its base.

[1] R. L. Stevenson, "The Old Pacific Capital," in *Across the Plains.*

[2] See *College Readings,* page 352.

[3] See *College Readings,* page 361.

From a photograph

THE BAY OF MONTEREY

From a photograph by Paul Elder & Co.

The great detached colonnade, with its central rotunda, is the climax of the entire structure. . . . At the extremities of the double colonnade, and spaced regularly along it, are groups of four columns, each crowned with a great box designed for flowers and vines. . . . On the water side of the rotunda, a novel effect of inclusion is obtained by semicircular walls of mesembryanthemum.

Beautiful as is the Palace of Fine Arts by day, it is even more lovely at night. Either by moonlight or under the gentle flood of illumination that rests softly upon it when the heavens are dark, it is wonderful. Stand where you will around this structure, or on the opposite margin of the lagoon, and each position gives you a different grouping of columns and dome and wall, a different setting of trees and water. The form of the Palace is responsible for this. Roughly speaking, a rectangular structure presents but four views. But the great arc of the Fine Arts, with its detached colonnade following the same curve on either side of the rotunda, is not so restricted. Every new point of view discloses new beauty. The breadth of the lagoon before it guarantees a proper perspective.[1]

It is still more interesting to study the methods of different men in describing the same scene. After looking at the interior of Durham Cathedral and trying to express the effect of it in your own words, read Hawthorne's description.

Durham Cathedral has one advantage over the others which I have seen, there being no organ-screen, nor any sort of partition between the choir and nave; so that we saw its entire length, nearly five hundred feet, in one vista. The pillars of the nave are immensely thick, but hardly of proportionate height, and they support the round Norman arch; nor is there, as far as I remember, a single pointed arch in the cathedral. The effect

[1] Ben Macomber, *The Jewel City*, ch. xii.

is to give the edifice an air of heavy grandeur. It seems to have been built before the best style of church architecture had established itself; so that it weighs upon the soul, instead of helping it to aspire. First, there are these round arches, supported by gigantic columns; then, immediately above, another row of round arches, behind which is the usual gallery that runs, as it were, in the thickness of the wall, around the nave of the cathedral; then, above all, another row of round arches, enclosing the windows of the clere-story. The great pillars are ornamented in various ways, — some with a great spiral groove running from bottom to top; others with two spirals, ascending in different directions, so as to cross over one another; some are fluted or channelled straight up and down; some are wrought with chevrons, like those on the sleeve of a police-inspector. There are zigzag cuttings and carvings, which I do not know how to name scientifically, round the arches of the doors and windows; but nothing that seems to have flowered out spontaneously, as natural incidents of a grand and beautiful design.[1]

Note the method here: first the dominant tone — the impression of length and "the air of heavy grandeur" — then specific details so minutely observed that the grooves on one pillar are compared to the chevrons on the sleeve of a police-inspector. What is the order in which the details are arranged?

Now compare this elaborate description with Dr. Johnson's swift and impressionistic account:

The cathedral has a massiness and solidity such as I have seen in no other place: it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantic dignity, and aspires to no other praise than that of rocky solidity and indeterminate duration.[2]

[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne, *English Note-Books*, July 11, 1857.
[2] Samuel Johnson, *Letters*, Aug. 12, 1773.

Edinburgh Castle from the Grassmarket

This is magnificent. We do not often think of Dr. Johnson as a pictorial artist. He contents himself here with emphasizing the dominant tone of the place by sounding the sonorous organ-notes of his Latin style — " gigantic dignity," " rocky solidity and indeterminate duration." Read this passage aloud, and repeat several times the masterly phrase " indeterminate duration." It fills the mind with the effect of this cathedral more powerfully than would pages of elaborate detail.

Edinburgh Castle has fired the imagination of many writers. Let us compare descriptions of it by Scott, Stevenson, Borrow, Lockhart, and Ruskin. There is an interesting contrast between Scott's poetic and his prose descriptions. In *The Heart of Midlothian*, he writes of the Castle as seen from the Grassmarket:

> In Edinburgh, a large open street, or rather oblong square, surrounded by high houses, called the Grassmarket, was used for the same melancholy purpose [executions]. . . . The houses in the Grassmarket are, generally speaking, of a mean description; yet the place is not without some features of grandeur, being overhung by the southern side of the huge rock on which the Castle stands, and by the moss-grown battlements and turreted walls of the ancient fortress.

This is dull: it does not paint a vivid picture. The words do not fill the eye with the tremendous height of the crag and the romantic aspect of the Castle. Indeed, the Castle merely " stands," which is equivalent to saying that it is there. In *Marmion*, on the other hand, Scott has this dashing and brilliant description:

The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And ting'd them with a lustre proud
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur cloth'd the height
Where the huge Castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Pil'd deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!

Here Scott's paints are mixed with the fire of his poetry. How vividly he suggests the color and shape of the Castle — "sable turrets," "dusky grandeur cloth'd the height," "the huge Castle holds its state"! How effectively he introduces motion, which the crag seems to have as the eye moves over it — "ridgy back heaves to the sky, pil'd deep and massy, close and high"!

Stevenson, "born within the frown[1] of Edinburgh Castle," was fond of picturing it in his books. He makes St. Ives, the French prisoner, escape down the face of the precipice. In *Edinburgh* he has this graphic passage:

In the very midst stands one of the most satisfactory crags in nature — a Bass Rock upon dry land, rooted in a garden, shaken by passing trains, carrying a crown of battlements and turrets, and describing its war-like shadow over the liveliest and brightest thoroughfare of the new town.

[1] This admirable phrase is C. T. Copeland's in his essay "Robert Louis Stevenson," in the *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1895.

The phrase "carrying a crown of battlements" is so true, so picturesque, that it seems the inevitably right one. The idea of the castle encircling the brow of the rock like a crown is the most swift and vivid means of flashing into the mind of a person who has never seen the Castle an image of its shape.

As an exercise, test the effectiveness of these other descriptions of Edinburgh Castle by comparing them with the picture. Note the choice of words, the figures of speech, the arrangement of details:

The Castle in which I dwelt stood upon a rock, a bold and craggy one, which, at first sight, would seem to bid defiance to any feet save those of goats and chamois. . . . The boldest features of the rock are descried on the southern side, where, after shelving down gently from the wall for some distance, it terminates abruptly in a precipice, black and horrible, of some three hundred feet at least, as if the axe of nature had been here employed cutting sheer down, and leaving behind neither excrescence nor spur — a dizzy precipice it is.[1]

This gigantic rock lifts itself high above all that surrounds it, and breaks upon the sky with the same commanding blackness of mingled crags, cliffs, buttresses, and battlements. These, indeed, shift and vary their outlines at every step, but everywhere there is the same unmoved effect of general expression, the same lofty and imposing image, to which the eye turns with the same unquestioning worship. Whether you pass on the southern side, close under the bare and shattered blocks of granite, where the crumbling turrets on the summit seem as if they had shot out of the kindred rock in some fantastic freak of Nature, and where, amidst the overhanging mass of darkness, you vainly endeavor to descry the track by which Wallace scaled;

[1] George Borrow, *Lavengro.*

whether you look from the north, where the rugged cliffs find room for some scanty patches of moss and broom, to diversify their barren grey, and where the whole mass is softened into beauty by the wild green glen which intervenes between the spectator and its foundations, wherever you are placed, and however it is viewed, you feel at once that here is the eye of the landscape, and the essence of the grandeur. . . . If the air is cloudless and serene, what can be finer than the calm reposing dignity of those old towers — every delicate angle of fissured rock, every loop-hole and every lineament seen clearly and distinctly in all their minuteness? or, if the mist be wreathed around the basis of the rock, and frowning fragments of the citadel emerge only here and there from out the racking clouds that envelop them, the mystery and the gloom only rivet the eye the faster, and half-baffled Imagination does more than the work of Sight. . . . When the daylight goes down in purple glory, what lines of gold creep along the hoary brow of its antique strength! When the whole heaven is deluged, and the winds are roaring fiercely, and 'snow and hail, and stormy vapour,' are let loose to make war upon its front, with what an air of pride does the veteran citadel brave all their well-known wrath, 'cased in the unfeeling armour of old time!' [1]

The Castle rock of Edinburgh is, as far as I know, simply the noblest in Scotland. . . . Nothing can be more noble or interesting than the true thirteenth or fourteenth century castle, when built in a difficult position, its builder taking advantage of every inch of ground to gain more room, and of every irregularity of surface for purposes of outlook and defence; so that the castle *sate* its rock as a strong rider sits his horse, — fitting its limbs to every width of the flint beneath it; and fringing the mountain promontory far into the sky with the wild crests of its fantastic battlements.[2]

[1] J. G. Lockhart, *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk.*
[2] John Ruskin, *Arrows of the Chase.*

84. Emphasis. — In description the beginning and the end should be particularly emphatic. Since the reader's ability to follow you depends largely upon his knowledge of the point of view, it is vital that you give him this knowledge at once. Again, if you wish him to receive a dominant impression of a scene or person, you should begin at the outset to create this impression. You may merely hint at it or you may proclaim it: whatever you do, he should feel it. Observe how effectively the chief impression is produced at the beginning of the descriptions in the previous section. As you progress, give the most significant details the most space. At the end, bring out forcibly the dominant tone by summarizing phrases or by telling details.

85. Style. — Important as structure is in description, style is vastly more important. Throughout everything that follows, it must be remembered that what really counts toward the effectiveness of great description is more than anything else the genius of the writer. Nevertheless, certain devices can be commended and certain habits have to be condemned.

86. Be Objective. — If I say, "The people seemed to be suffering from the heat," I make a subjective statement; that is, I phrase the matter in terms of its effect upon myself. If I say, "The people were fanning themselves desperately," I put the matter objectively; that is, I give the evidence instead of my inference from that evidence. In description, one tries, wherever possible, to avoid generalization without evidence. The reason for this is clear: to say "what a wonderful view it was" is to convey no information whatever about the view. Two people who are standing in front of a picture may

exchange such comments as this, but description is supposed to be written for the benefit of those who have not seen the thing described or who, even if they have seen it, can best be stimulated by a vivid representation of the effect of it upon a keenly imaginative mind. Therefore, keep your work free from vague generalizations, especially from those generalizations which usurp the place of vivid details. "It was a most impressive sight." Then make it so, and the reader will do the rest. If you have given the details upon which this generalization is based, you do not need the generalization; if you have not, your generalization has nothing to rest upon, — it is like an unsupported assertion in argument. Do not, therefore, say, "It made me feel sorry to see how grieved she was." Do not say, "She was evidently much grieved." If she was *evidently* grieved, *give us the evidence.* Did she wipe her eyes? Did her lips tremble? If so, tell us so, and there is no need to tell us that she was grieved. To do so without the evidence is to keep the reader in the dark; to do so after having given him the evidence is to deprive him of the pleasure of using his mind. In the following passages,

(*a*) a spinning-wheel that had not been used for years,

(*b*) a spinning-wheel that had not been used for years, as was evident from the dust and cobwebs that covered it,

(*c*) a spinning-wheel covered with dust and cobwebs,

we have, first, a generalization unsupported by evidence. Descriptively, this is ineffective. In the second passage we have the generalization and the evidence, but the inference to be drawn from the evidence is so obvious that the passage lacks all stimulus. In the third passage we have

the evidence and are pleased at being allowed to draw our own conclusion.

Again, let us take three passages:

(*a*) The night was perfectly still.
(*b*) The flame from the candles went straight up in the air.
(*c*) The night was so still that the flame from the candles went straight up in the air.

The first passage makes us ask, "How do you know?"; the second passage makes us ask, "What of it?"; the third passage combines the evidence and the generalization in an effective way.

If we recall this advice about being objective, we shall be likely to remember several other important points about description: we shall remember not to thrust into the description either ourselves or any imaginary observer, unless there is need of such a figure; we shall not insult the reader by personally conducting him through the description when a more objective method would have enabled him to conduct himself; we shall avoid question marks and exclamation points. Few rules in connection with description, therefore, are more important than that it should be objective.

This matter of objectivity has another application: it means that we must not talk about what we are doing. We must not use such words as *description*, *scene*, *picture*, *picturesque*, *point of view*. We must not label our sensations as we do when we say that a thing *could be seen*, *could be heard*, *met the eye*, *met the ear*, or *saluted the nostrils*. To do that is not to be objective.

Again, this same useful principle of objectivity means that we must tell what, under the given circumstances,

would appear, not what we may happen to know was there. For example, in one of his stories Kipling has a torpedo boat destroyer tow a fishing schooner through a very thick fog. The schooner, instead of keeping directly astern, has sheered off well toward the quarter, the evidence of which is that the towrope is no longer pointing directly astern. Now how should that towrope be described? One knows what it actually was, — a big wet rope, curving down from the stern of the destroyer into the water and up again to the bow of the schooner. But to describe it in that way is to forget the fog. This Kipling does not do: he has one of his characters turn "a lantern on *a scant yard of the gleaming wire rope that pointed like a stick to my left.*" The point where the fog cuts off the cable is the point where the cable ends, so far as Kipling's description is concerned.

87. Figures of Speech.[1] — In Description, as in every kind of writing, that which is unfamiliar needs to be illustrated by that which is familiar. If I am writing the story of a battle, it is entirely ineffective to say that a bullet passed over my head: a balloon, a cloud, or a pigeon would do the same. To say that it whizzed over my head is somewhat better, but still far from vivid. To say that it sang by like the sound of a banjo string being tightened is to illustrate by the familiar what is to most Americans quite unfamiliar.

In general, the metaphor (which boldly says that something *is* something else) is better than the simile (which more timidly says that something is *like* something else). Remember also not to use "so to speak" and "as it were," for these expressions seem to indicate lack of faith in your

[1] See also § 188.

comparisons. Remember that the kind of personification which is called "pathetic fallacy" is usually ineffective. To say that the waves "tired of their sport" is fanciful, but not convincing.

If you study successful figures of speech, you will see that the writer who uses them chooses something which is familiar, harmonious, and true. Above all, you will notice that he does not mix his figures. He does not say that "his mind floats away on a side-track," because he visualizes the idea of floating and the idea of a side-track too vividly to allow himself to confuse them. Avoid trite comparisons, such as "swift as the wind," "quick as lightning," "smooth as glass," "white as snow," "black as night," and so on. These may be true resemblances, but they have been too often used.[1]

88. Expressive Verbs. — Do not employ colorless verbs, such as "be," "go," and "do." Remember that "seems" is much less effective than "is." Many weak descriptive sentences are weak just because the wrong verb has been chosen: for example, "The rushing river is visible as it tumbles foaming over the black rocks in its path." This contains good material, but has a very bad verb.[2] We can greatly improve this by saying that the river "tumbled," or "foamed," or "rushed" over the black rocks in its path. Make a study of the descriptions in § 83 and see how much more the verbs do than merely certify to the existence of the objects.[3]

[1] Cf. § 187.

[2] Compare the advice given on page 137 about labelling sensations.

[3] Compare the passage in § 90. See also Exercise 15 on page 147. Study the verbs in Ruskin's *Cloud Effects* (*College Readings*, 342–344, especially the final paragraph) and particularly Ruskin on Turner's "Slave Ship" (*College Readings*, 214–215).

89. Description by Effect. — In spite of what we have said about the needless introduction of people into description, it is important to remember that it is often desirable to describe things by their effect. If I say, "The telegraph poles rushed by the car window," I have not introduced any person, but have modified my method by describing what seems to the observer to be taking place.

90. Sound and Meaning. — It should always be remembered in description that not merely the meaning, but also the sound of a word contributes to the effect. Notice the force of the italicized words in the following passage:

The fog had gone, but a *sullen sea ran* in great *rollers* behind it. The "We're Here" *slid* into long *sunk* avenues and ditches which felt quite *sheltered* and homelike if they would only *stay still;* but they changed without rest or mercy, and flung up the schooner to crown one peak of a thousand gray hills, while the wind *hooted* through her rigging as she *zigzagged* down the *slopes*. Far away a *sea* would *burst* in a *sheet* of *foam*, and the others would follow *suit* as at a *signal*. (Kipling's *Captains Courageous*.)

91. Combination of Details. — The writer of description tries in every possible way to avoid the effect of inventory; that is, a series of disconnected details monotonously introduced. To lean one detail against another, as Stevenson did when he said, "The plunge of our anchor sent up clouds of birds wheeling and crying," is much more effective than to say, "Our anchor plunged into the water and the gulls flew away." If I am describing a room, it is tiresome to say, "On the north side of the room there

was an open fireplace, and on the south side of the room there was a bookcase." I would much better say, "The light from the fire showed the backs of the books in the case on the opposite wall." No trick of style is more striking in *Robinson Crusoe* than the skill by which Defoe, by leaning one detail against another, contrives to erect something which seems truthful. The same device gives reality to the following description of Peggotty's boat, in the third chapter of *David Copperfield:*

The tray was kept from tumbling down by a Bible, and the tray, if it had tumbled down, would have smashed a quantity of cups and saucers and a teapot that were grouped around the book.

92. Brevity. — Almost any other form of writing may — in spite of what Poe says — be sustained without injury to the effect; but description must not be allowed to drag on. Do not use ponderous introductions: begin when your actual description begins, and stop when your description stops. Cut your material to the quick, particularly when, in a story which is moving rapidly, you are trying for flashes of description. That he does this is one of the very great merits of Mr. Kipling, as the following passages will show. The first strives to give the effect of an express train; the second of an ocean liner.

.007 had caught one glimpse of the . . . south-bound express, laying the miles over his shoulder as a man peels a shaving from a soft board. The rest was a blur of maroon enamel, a bar of white light from the electrics in the cars, and a flicker of nickel-plated hand-rail on the rear platform.

[Dense fog on the Banks. Point of view: the deck of a fishing-schooner. A liner is heard coming straight toward them

through the fog.] Then Harvey felt that he was near a moving body, and found himself looking up and up at the wet edge of a cliff-like bow, leaping, it seemed, directly over the schooner. A jaunty little feather of water curled in front of it, and as it lifted it showed a long ladder of Roman numerals — XV., XVI., XVII., XVIII., and so forth, — on a salmon-coloured, gleaming side. It tilted forward and downward with a heart-stilling "Ssssooo"; the ladder disappeared; a line of brass-rimmed port-holes flashed past; a jet of steam puffed in Harvey's helplessly uplifted hands; a spout of hot water roared along the rail of the *We're Here*, and the little schooner staggered and shook in a rush of screw-torn water, as a liner's stern vanished in the fog.

93. Description in the Service of Narrative. — Description is of great use to narrative in setting the stage and in making vivid the costumes, facial expression, and byplay of the characters. In the older fiction the custom was to let the descriptive element appear in masses and to give it the point of view of the author. Some of these "set pieces" — notably the descriptions of the heroes and heroines — now strike us as curiously unlike the fashion of our own day. It is not merely because the clothes of these people seem queer and their beauty superhuman, but partly because the modern reader of fiction is not used to such unrelieved masses of description. We nowadays try — particularly in short stories, and most particularly in those short stories where the action is rapid — to break up the description, to make it swift, and, when possible, to have it seem to come from the characters. Notice how this is done in the following extract from Kipling's *William the Conqueror:*

The procession creaked past Hawkins's camp — three stained tents under a clump of dead trees, behind them the famine-shed, where a crowd of hopeless ones tossed their arms around the cooking-kettles.

"Wish to Heaven William had kept out of it," said Scott to himself, after a glance. "We'll have cholera, sure as a gun, when the Rains break."

But William seemed to have taken kindly to the operations of the Famine Code, which, when famine is declared, supersede the workings of the ordinary law. Scott saw her, the centre of a mob of weeping women, in a calico riding-habit, and a blue-grey felt hat with a gold puggaree.

"I want fifty rupees, please. I forgot to ask Jack before he went away. Can you lend it me? It's for condensed-milk for the babies," said she.

Scott took the money from his belt, and handed it over without a word. "For goodness' sake, take care of yourself," he said.

"O, I shall be all right. We ought to get the milk in two days. By the way, the orders are, I was to tell you, that you're to take one of Sir Jim's horses. There's a grey Cabuli here that I thought would be just your style, so I've said you'd take him. Was that right?"

"That's awfully good of you. We can't either of us talk much about style, I am afraid."

Scott was in a weather-stained drill shooting-kit, very white at the seams and a little frayed at the wrists. William regarded him thoughtfully, from his pith helmet to his greased ankle-boots. "You look very nice, I think. Are you sure you've everything you'll need — quinine, chlorodyne, and so on?"

"Think so," said Scott, patting three or four of his shooting-pockets as he mounted and rode alongside his convoy.

"Good-bye," he cried.

"Good-bye, and good luck," said William. "I'm awfully

obliged for the money." She turned on a spurred heel and disappeared into the tent, while the carts pushed on past the famine-sheds, past the roaring lines of the thick, fat fires, down to the baked Gehenna of the South.

The inexperienced story-writer, having invented his fictitious characters, is likely to find too little for them to do. They should be made not only to carry on the story by their conversation, but to relieve the author of various descriptive tasks. This they are particularly competent to do, because they represent a variety of temperaments. In Stevenson's *Lodging for the Night*, for example, François Villon knocks, late at night, at a house and is admitted by a soldierly looking old gentleman, who almost at once leaves the room to seek food and drink for his guest. Up to this point there has been no description of the room. While the old gentleman is away, Villon, as he naturally would, takes a quick look around the apartment. Now Villon is a potential thief. The objects that he notices are, therefore, chiefly the valuable objects. To enumerate them from his point of view gives just the kind of quick, natural description which would be impossible from the more formal point of view and the less specialized temperament of the author.

At a slightly earlier point in the same story — at the point, in fact, where Villon knocks at this house — we learn that one-half the door was thrown open, and that an old gentleman stood in it, holding a hand-lamp and surveying Villon. This being the first appearance in the story of the old gentleman, the reader naturally expects his portrait. The conditions for the portrait are, it should be observed, extremely favorable. The open door,

brought about by the natural course of the plot, forms a frame, and the flickering hand-lamp makes not only a detail in the picture but a condition which affects other details.[1]

EXERCISES

1. Exercise in observation: Choose two buildings which apparently are identical, and make a list of all the differences you can discover — architectural details, materials, colors, etc.

2. A pair of descriptions of the same view seen under different conditions: for example, a city street (*a*) on Sunday morning, (*b*) on Monday morning; or the same view (*a*) at noon, (*b*) at midnight; a certain view (*a*) on a foggy day, (*b*) on a clear day; or (*a*) on a summer day, (*b*) on a winter day; or (*a*) on a very hot day, (*b*) on a very cold day.

3. A description of a room which shall show as much as possible about the character and favorite interests of the occupant. (But keep the occupant of the room outside the picture, and suggest without actually telling what kind of person the occupant is.)

4. A pair of short descriptions of a person: one written by a friend, one by an unfriendly observer.

5. A description emphasizing other senses than sight.

6. Supply a variety of specific words to fill each of the following blanks:

(*a*) My rival gave me a — look.
(*b*) The poor fellow was dressed very —ly.
(*c*) The newsboy thanked me in a — voice.
(*d*) The great dining hall had an air of —.
(*e*) The fog made everything —.
(*f*) The empty church was —.
(*g*) He looked at the dog —ly.

[1] Study the use of description in Stevenson's "Sire de Malétroit's Door" (*College Readings*, 502 ff.).

7. Supply a variety of specific words in place of the italicized words in the following sentences:

(*a*) The old man *walked* away.
(*b*) The drums *sounded*.
(*c*) Two girls *moved* by us.
(*d*) The mother *looked* out of the window.
(*e*) A little boy was *coming* down the stairs.
(*f*) He *got* into the boat.
(*g*) The cloth had a *pleasant* feeling.
(*h*) He *took* his hat from the table.
(*i*) He *walked* out of the room and *shut* the door.

8. A dinner table from the point of view of (*a*) a hungry little boy, and (*b*) an anxious hostess.

9. A view from my window: (*a*) when I feel happy, (*b*) when I am bored.

10. Make a detailed comparison of the two following paragraphs, commenting on choice of words, figures, picturesqueness of detail, and anything else that seems of importance. Discuss the last sentence in the first selection, from the point of view of (*a*) unity, and (*b*) effectiveness.

1. The branches closed over his head again, and Kala Nag began to go down into the valley, — not quietly this time, but as a runaway gun goes down a steep bank — in one rush. The huge limbs moved as steadily as pistons, eight feet to each stride, and the wrinkled skin of the elbow-points rustled. The undergrowth on either side of him ripped with a noise like torn canvas, and the saplings that he heaved away right and left with his shoulders sprang back again, and banged him on the flank, and great trails of creepers, all matted together, hung from his tusks as he threw his head from side to side and plowed out his pathway.

2. Kala Nag entered the forest, and began to go down hill. His strides were steady, and eight feet long; and he moved

so fast that the skin on his joints wrinkled. There was thick undergrowth all about him, through which he forced his way with difficulty. The saplings and creepers which he had to push aside made the descent arduous; for so tightly did they seem to cling to him, that he was forced to open a pathway for himself with his tusks.

11. The football (or baseball) field just before the game as it would look: (*a*) to an Englishman who had never seen the American game, (*b*) to a little boy whose older brother was taking him to the game.

12. The football (or baseball) field as it looked after the game: (*a*) when we won, (*b*) when they won.

13. Describe *very briefly* and *very rapidly* something which, though vivid, is all over in a few seconds, *e.g.* a collision, a sharp rally at tennis, a double play in baseball.

14. A country railway station: (*a*) just before the train arrived, (*b*) half an hour later.

15. Criticize the following passage:

"Just before nine o'clock in the morning, Randall Hall presents a scene full of life. There is the loud clattering of dishes, the constant hum of voices, and the sound of many footsteps upon the cold stone floor. The scene which is before the eye is fully as lively as the noises which fall upon the ear."

16. Comment on:

(*a*) The use of sound in Jefferies' *In Front of the Royal Exchange* (*College Readings*, p. 369).

The use of sound in Norris' *The Ploughing* (*College Readings*, p. 348).

(*b*) The use of color in Ruskin's *St. Marks* (*College Readings*, p. 383).

The use of color in Hearn's *Sunrise at Port-of-Spain* (*College Readings*, p. 340).

(*c*) The use of motion in Ruskin's *Cloud Effects* (*College Readings*, p. 342).

(*d*) The use of weather in White's *On the Wind at Night* (*College Readings*, p. 420).

The use of weather in Ruskin's *Cloud Effects* (*College Readings*, p. 342).

CHAPTER V

NARRATION

94. Definition. — What do we mean when we say of a person that he is "a good story-teller"? We have in mind many attributes: readiness, enthusiasm, a feeling for striking details of situation or character, and a happy faculty of keeping our attention alert to the end. A skillful narrator alternately stimulates and satisfies our curiosity. It is action, events, that he is concerned with: and the same interest in our own minds is echoed in the eternal question, — "What happened next?" Narration, then, is the recounting of a series of events. The essence of good narration is (1) action, and (2) the arrangement of the details of action both in the order of time and in the order of cause and effect. It is this requirement that makes narration an art. If we set down a record of the events of everyday life hour by hour, we are lost in confusion because we see no logical relation of cause and effect. The event which happens at three o'clock may follow in time that which happened at two, but there may be no causal link between them. The art of narration does not merely copy life, but it simplifies life by selecting from the mass of events the essential ones and by arranging these in the order of time and causation.

But events do not happen by themselves. Events happen to people, and occur in places. Action, charac-

ters, and setting are the elements, then, which must be woven together to form the pattern of our narrative. Kipling's little rhyme will help us to fix these elements in mind:

> I keep six honest serving-men
> (They taught me all I knew) : —
> Their names are What and Why and When
> And How and Where and Who.

SIMPLE NARRATION

The most interesting way to learn the qualities of good narration is to contrast the following examples. The first selection comes from a typical dime-novel.

It was all very well to talk about flying, but the question which bothered the Bradys was which way to go.

They did not debate long. The whizzing arrows kept on coming.

As the Yaquis are well known to be deadshots with their bows and arrows, Old King Brady felt that this was merely a warning for them to go no further.

"We take the back track, Harry," he cried.

They wheeled about and were just starting when they saw a dozen or more half-dressed Indians scrambling down from the cliff on ahead.

"They are after our horses!" gasped Harry.

"Not a doubt of it," replied Old King Brady. "If we can save ourselves, we shall do well. Dismount, Harry. We take to the rocks."

They slipped from their saddles and sent the horses forward on the run.

The cliff on the left was just a mass of broken rock.

Among these the Bradys now hid themselves.

The situation had become very serious.

The Yaquis are well known to be absolutely merciless.

But it must have been as Old King Brady said.

The horses were what was wanted.

For some unfathomable reason the Indians did not desire to kill their riders.

Peering out from behind the rocks, the Bradys saw them halt the bronchos. Three mounted and went dashing madly down the canyon. The rest scrambled back up the cliff and disappeared.

The position of the detectives was now a terrible one.

To be stranded in the Antunez range without horses or provisions was almost equivalent to their death warrant.

For a long time they waited, but nothing more was seen or heard of the Indians.

Let us turn immediately from this abominably bad narrative to Froude's account of the martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket in Canterbury Cathedral.

From the middle of the transept in which the archbishop [Thomas à Becket] was standing a single pillar rose into the roof. On the eastern side of it opened a chapel of St. Benedict, in which were the tombs of several of the old primates. On the west, running parallel to the nave, was a lady chapel. Behind the pillar, steps led up into the choir, where voices were already singing vespers. A faint light may have been reflected into the transept from the choir tapers, and candles may perhaps have been burning before the altars in the two chapels — of light from without through the windows at that hour there could have been scarcely any. Seeing the knights coming on, the clergy who had entered with the archbishop closed the door and barred it. "What do you fear?" he cried in a clear, loud voice. "Out of the way, you cowards! The Church of God must not be made a fortress." He stepped back and reopened the door with his

own hands, to let in the trembling wretches who had been shut out. They rushed past him, and scattered in the hiding-places of the vast sanctuary, in the crypt, in the galleries, or behind the tombs. All, or almost all, even of his closest friends, William of Canterbury, Benedict, John of Salisbury himself, forsook him to shift for themselves, admitting frankly that they were unworthy of martyrdom. The archbishop was left alone with his chaplain Fitzstephen, Robert of Merton his old master, and Edward Grim, the stranger from Cambridge — or perhaps with Grim only, who says that he was the only one who stayed, and was the only one certainly who showed any sign of courage. A cry had been raised in the choir that armed men were breaking into the cathedral. The vespers ceased; the few monks assembled left their seats and rushed to the edge of the transept, looking wildly into the darkness.

The archbishop was on the fourth step beyond the central pillar ascending into the choir when the knights came in. The outline of his figure may have been just visible to them, if light fell upon it from candles in the lady chapel. Fitzurse passed to the right of the pillar, De Morville, Tracy, and Le Breton to the left. Robert de Broc and Hugh Mauclerc, an apostate priest, remained at the door by which they entered. A voice cried, "Where is the traitor? Where is Thomas Becket?" There was silence; such a name could not be acknowledged. "Where is the archbishop?" Fitzurse shouted. "I am here," the archbishop replied, descending the steps, and meeting the knights full in the face. "What do you want with me? I am not afraid of your swords. I will not do what is unjust."

The knights closed round him. "Absolve the persons whom you have excommunicated," they said, "and take off the suspensions."

"They have made no satisfaction," he answered; "I will not."

"Then you shall die as you have deserved," they said.

They had not meant to kill him — certainly not at that time and in that place. One of them touched him on the shoulder

with the flat of his sword, and hissed in his ears, "Fly, or you are a dead man." There was still time; with a few steps he would have been lost in the gloom of the cathedral, and could have concealed himself in any one of a hundred hiding places. But he was careless of life, and he felt that his time was come. "I am ready to die," he said. "May the Church through my blood obtain peace and liberty! I charge you in the name of God that you hurt no one here but me." The people from the town were now pouring into the cathedral; De Morville was keeping them back with difficulty at the head of the steps from the choir, and there was danger of a rescue. Fitzurse seized hold of the archbishop, meaning to drag him off as a prisoner. He had been calm so far; his pride rose at the indignity of an arrest. "Touch me not, Reginald!" he said, wrenching his cloak out of Fitzurse's grasp. "Off, thou pander, thou!" Le Breton and Fitzurse grasped him again, and tried to force him upon Tracy's back. He grappled with Tracy and flung him to the ground, and then stood with his back against the pillar, Edward Grim supporting him. He reproached Fitzurse for ingratitude for past kindness; Fitzurse whispered to him again to fly. "I will not fly," he said, and then Fitzurse swept his sword over him and dashed off his cap. Tracy, rising from the pavement, struck at his head. Grim raised his arm and caught the blow. The arm fell broken and the one friend found faithful sank back disabled against the wall. The sword, with its remaining force, wounded the archbishop above the forehead, and the blood trickled down his face. Standing firmly with his hands clasped, he bent his neck for the death-stroke, saying in a low voice, "I am prepared to die for Christ and for His Church." These were his last words. Tracy again struck him. He fell forward upon his knees and hands. In that position Le Breton dealt him a blow which severed the scalp from the head and broke the sword against the stone, saying, "Take that for my Lord William." De Broc or Mauclerc — the needless ferocity was attributed to both of them — strode forward from the cloister door, set his foot on the neck of the dead

lion, and spread the brains upon the pavement with his sword's point. "We may go," he said; "the traitor is dead, and will trouble us no more." [1]

As we read this passage, we are caught up into the great march of the narrative, we suddenly become spectators of this tragic event, and our emotions are stirred. Not for one moment do we throb with excitement as we read the dime novel incident. Indeed, we are annoyed at its utter dullness. In despair we cry out to the author, "Lift us! Lift us!" but he lets us fall exhausted from his nerveless fingers.

95. Development of Situation. — The chief trouble with this incident is that it is a mere shred of narrative. In Hamlet's words, it is "stale, flat, and unprofitable." It is not developed. It is not rounded out with the details which give us the sense of completion, which satisfy us that real flesh-and-blood men are having an adventure. We are not made to feel the peril. The author lisps ineffectually, "The situation had become very serious," but we do not believe him. We do not *see* the Indians, we do not *see* the escaping detectives, we do not *see* the riderless horses. The fact is, the dime novel writer cannot see a situation steadily or see it whole. He cannot look a situation in the face long enough to recognize it as a situation.

The author of the *Death of Becket*, on the other hand, has presented a fully developed and well-rounded situation. This event has completeness, totality. Here are the burly activity, the surging fullness, the suspense,

[1] J. A. Froude, "Life and Times of Thomas Becket," in *Short Studies on Great Subjects.*

the rising accumulation of deeds which swell to a great climax. The cries fill our ears; the moving figures in the scene fill our eyes. All is visualized. Becket "wrenches his cloak out of Fitzurse's grasp," and when he falls, he falls "forward upon his knees and hands." The action has its own individuality. Thus it was that this event happened, unlike any other event before or since.

96. Motivation. — In the dime novel episode the relation of cause and effect is managed very feebly. The various details seem like fragments of a broken dream. Things happen too abruptly and for no clear reason. There is no preparation for effects which are to follow. In other words, there is no "motivation." Motivation is the art of preparation. A good narrative, like a good play, proceeds from effect to effect, each of which grows from a cause or motive. The skillful author points forward: he "foreshadows without forestalling." Stevenson, who made so many shrewd remarks about narration, wrote thus about his own care in motivation (he is speaking of *The Beach of Falesá*): "Make another end to it? Ah, yes, but that's not the way I write; the whole tale is implied; I never use an effect when I can help it, unless it prepares the effects that are to follow; that's what a story consists in. To make another end, that is to make the beginning all wrong. The body and end of a short story is bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning." Now observe the skillful preparation in the *Death of Becket*. The gathering dusk, the entrance of the knights with drawn swords, the details about the pillar and the choir steps, the desertion of Becket by most of his friends, the cries of the monks, Becket's courage, his unyielding pride, — these are some of the things

which foreshadow the tragedy, and increase the suspense. When finally the end comes, we realize to the full that it is "bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning."

97. Climax. — Furthermore, we notice that in the episode of the detectives there is no climax, or point of highest interest. The events do not lead to a definite focus or objective. The escape of the Bradys should be the point of highest interest, but this is not thrown into relief. In the other narrative, however, the death of Becket is the strongly marked climax. Our steadily rising interest is focused on this point. And when we reach this point, we are gratified to find that the author has taken space enough to develop it into an able-bodied climax by means of vivid details.

98. Setting. — Another important thing to remember is that in the detective incident we have no feeling of place, or weather, or light. A few cliffs are mentioned, but they may as well be canvas cliffs: they do not impress us as being anything real. Nor are we clearly informed as to the lie of the land: the stage is not set for the action. It should be understood that we do not need much description of landscape. But we do ask for the necessary details of topography, so that we can follow the actors of the story without confusion. Now note in the account of Becket the brief but effective statement of the setting. The few architectural details of the transept, the pillar, the steps, enable us both to understand the action and to visualize it. The faint light in the cathedral is not only true to the time — late afternoon in December — but it fills us with dread and foreboding. This harmony of place and time and action is masterly.

Becket standing with his back against the pillar in the gathering gloom is a figure that lives in the mind's eye forever.

99. Characters. — What shall we say about the characters in these two narratives? After all, our abiding interest is in human character. The persons in the dime novel can hardly be regarded as human beings at all. They are mere names. They have no traits of character; they show no feeling. They have no corporeal substance. The Yaquis' arrows could have passed straight through these shadows. But the Yaquis themselves are only painted phantoms. Becket, on the contrary, is an actual man, strongly individualized. Fearless in the face of impending death, resolute in his refusal of his enemies' demands, staunch in his belief that the Church is speaking through him, then suddenly bursting forth with haughty pride, — this is a man charged with personality.

100. Dialogue. — The vitality of a narrative is always enhanced by the speech of the actors. Good dialogue serves several purposes: it explains the situation, it reveals character, it propels the story. In the dime novel the detectives make a few commonplace remarks which do not adequately represent the way they feel under the circumstances. Nor is their dialogue flavored with characteristic touches. But the dialogue between Becket and the knights is highly dramatic. "Where is the traitor? Where is Thomas Becket?" What insolence is packed into this speech! There is no answer. Becket's silence reveals his lofty pride. Character is showing itself with passionate intensity on the verge of death. "Where is the archbishop?" "I am here."

These few speeches sum up all the essentials of good dialogue. They make the narrative move on rapidly; they bring before us the living men as no description can; they flash upon us both momentary passions and the deeps of character.

101. Style. — There is a vast difference between the two selections in the matter of style. The dime novelist uses dull and lifeless phrases which have no power to stir our emotions. The language is threadbare. There are no pictorial details. Can we imagine a more aimless or insipid style than this?

> The situation had become very serious.
> The Yaquis are well known to be absolutely merciless.
> But it must have been as Old King Brady said.
> The horses were what was wanted.

Contrast this with the graphic power and steady onward sweep of Froude's style. Here the words stir us like trumpets. Details appeal to the ear and eye: "voices singing vespers"; "the gloom of the cathedral"; "the faint light from the choir tapers"; Becket "grappled with Tracy"; "the blood trickled down his face"; "the sword broke against the stone." Everything is vivid, and our imagination is fired.

Now with these essentials of good narration in mind — (1) development of situation, (2) motivation, (3) climax, (4) setting, (5) character, (6) dialogue, (7) style — dip your pens in ink courageously and write a story that people will like to read.

102. Material. — Here the questions arise: "What shall we write about?" "How shall we choose our mate-

rial?" Your material may come from various sources: experience and observation, reading, and imagination.

1. *Experience.* — Whether you have lived in the city or the country you have an interesting background of experience. What is the most exciting thing that ever happened to you? What adventures have you had in the woods, at the seashore, on a farm, on the athletic field, or at dances? What incident in which you were the hero or the villain or only a spectator are you fond of telling by the fireside? Hunting, fishing, sailing, travelling, baseball, football — any one of these will yield excellent material.

2. *Reading.* — You may get admirable hints for stories from books of history, biography, or travel, and from newspapers. Read books about the French Revolution, as Dickens did in preparing to write his *Tale of Two Cities*, and then narrate incidents vividly, or imagine yourself taking part in them. It is fascinating to re-create the drama of the past, to climb the Alps with Hannibal, to cross the Rubicon with Cæsar, to fight at Austerlitz with Napoleon, to sail with Columbus, to flee from Loch Leven with Mary Queen of Scots, or to sign the Declaration of Independence by the side of Franklin.

Newspapers are an inexhaustible mine of incidents which will work up into good stories. Every day the eye is seized by a picturesque event, and the mind is busy in reconstructing the details.

BURGLAR SAVES BABY'S LIFE

He Came to Rob Los Angeles Woman, but Remained to Minister to Case of Croup, and Mrs. Morris won't Describe him to Police.

Los Angeles, Cal., Feb. 15. — A burglar who went to rob Mrs. Fred Morris remained to save her baby's life, according to a report she made yesterday to the police. Mrs. Morris said her baby was stricken with croup. She started to run for a physician. Just as she went out her front door she met a masked man who ordered her to keep quiet at the risk of her life. She screamed, "My baby is dying; I am going for a doctor."

"Let me help you," said the robber, dropping a revolver in his pocket.

Mrs. Morris, frightened, led him back into the house. He asked for vinegar, sugar, and water and concocted a mixture which he forced down the infant's throat. Then he rubbed olive oil on the child's chest and worked for an hour before he told the mother it was out of danger.

"You must have a baby yourself," remarked Mrs. Morris.

"I have five," replied the man. "That's why I came here to-night."

Then he left and Mrs. Morris refused to give the police a description of him.

BOY CONVICTS CHAUFFEUR

Carnegie Hero Who Traps Driver Fixes Guilt of Manslaughter

New York, March 23. — Upon the testimony of George H. Callaghan, a 16-year-old boy, John O'Hanlon, a chauffeur, was convicted to-day of manslaughter in the second degree and was remanded for sentence.

O'Hanlon's machine ran over and killed a young woman last October, and the chauffeur put on full speed in an attempt to escape. But Callaghan, who witnessed the tragedy, sprang on the running board and clung there, despite O'Hanlon's blows, until a policeman interfered. The boy subsequently received a Carnegie hero medal for his act.

In these brief clippings the essential parts of the action are given. It is an easy matter to expand and develop these situations. You should keep a scrapbook in which you can paste news items that suggest effective narratives. Incidentally, you will become absorbed in keenly watching the "stream of the world," which is so full of dramatic interest.

3. *Imagination.* — But the germ of your story may spring from your imagination. You may be able to invent situations, and to see in your mind's eye characters doing interesting things in interesting places. This does not mean that these stories need be fantastic or grotesque. The characters born of your imagination may set their feet squarely on the ground and cast their shadows behind them. No one doubts the reality of Hamlet, Becky Sharp, or Long John Silver. The ways in which stories may arise in a writer's mind and events may be created were once explained by Stevenson in conversation thus: "There are, so far as I know, three ways, and three ways only, of writing a story. You may take a plot and fit characters to it, or you may take a character and choose incidents and situations to develop it, or lastly — you must bear with me while I try to make this clear" — (here he made a gesture with his hand as if he were trying to shape something and give it outline and form) —

" you may take a certain atmosphere and get action and persons to express it and realize it. I'll give you an example — *The Merry Men.* There I began with the feeling of one of those islands on the west coast of Scotland, and I gradually developed the story to express the sentiment with which the coast affected me." [1]

Another helpful aid in invention is the use of allegory. Start with a general truth based on experience, or a proverb such as " Honesty is the best policy," and then devise characters and events that will exemplify this truth. It is not necessary that the point brought out should be a moral one. You do not need to append a moral tag. The central truth should animate the narrative and determine the main lines of structure. An interesting story is told of Guy de Maupassant in this connection. A friend of Maupassant, to test his powers, once said to him, " Now, here is a piece of string, an insignificant piece of string. You can't make a story about that." " A piece of string ! " said Maupassant. " Why, yes, it's very easy to make a story about that. Little things like that may often be very important." And accordingly he wrote his famous story *A Piece of String*,[2] which shows that the most insignificant things may produce portentous results.

103. Notebook. — You should jot down in a notebook various ideas for stories, striking situations, ingenious effects, clever speeches which flash into your mind. Some of the most famous notebooks are those kept by Hawthorne — the English and the American Notebooks.

[1] Graham Balfour, *The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Ch. xv.

[2] See A. V. Waite and E. M. Taylor, *Modern Masterpieces of Short Prose Fiction.*

Here he recorded all sorts of ideas for stories, many of which he never used.

A person to be the death of his beloved in trying to raise her to more than mortal perfection; yet this should be a comfort to him for having aimed so highly and holily. (This is the germ of his story *The Birthmark*.)

A person or family long desires some particular good. At last it comes in such profusion as to be the great pest of their lives.

A person to be writing a tale, and to find that it shapes itself against his intentions; that the characters act otherwise than he thought; that unforeseen events occur; and a catastrophe comes which he strives in vain to avert. It might shadow forth his own fate — he having made himself one of the personages.

A young man and girl meet together, each in search of a person to be known by some particular sign. They watch and wait a great while for that person to pass. At last some casual circumstance discloses that each is the one that the other is waiting for. Moral, — that what we need for our happiness is often close at hand, if we knew but how to seek for it.

A letter written a century or more ago, but which has never yet been unsealed.

You should also look at the extracts from Charles Dickens's Book of Memoranda which are printed in Forster's *Life of Dickens*.[1] Here are outlines of subjects or characters, titles for stories, and groups of names for characters. Here is the germ of the *Tale of Two Cities*. Other jottings are as follows:

[1] Vol. II, Book IX, Ch. 7.

Two girls mismarrying two men. The man who has evil in him, dragging the superior woman down. The man who has good in him, raising the inferior woman up.

Open a story by bringing two strongly contrasted places and strongly contrasted sets of people into the connection necessary for the story, by means of an electric message. Describe the message — *be* the message — flashing along through space, over the earth, and under the sea.

104. Plan. — When the material for a story has been gathered, the next step is to plan it out. Many interesting problems arise, the settling of which will call into play our originality. How shall we determine the limits of our narrative? Where shall we begin and where end? What is to be the climax? How many characters do we need? These matters are dependent on our purpose and are bound up with the large structural principle — unity. A story is read from the beginning to the end, but it is planned from the end to the beginning. Exposition has a plan and indicates it at the outset. Narration has a plan, but reveals it gradually. Its method is the method of suspense. The reader must be kept guessing; yet, as we have seen, he should be given little hints to pique his curiosity, and little clues to keep him on the scent. It is just as if an author should go out into a field some morning and bury a dagger in one place, a diamond ring in another, a letter in a third, a doubloon in a fourth, and hide his heroine in a cave in the woods. Then in the afternoon he says to the reader, "Come on, let's read a story"; and together they go across the field and discover the dagger, and are startled at the ring, and surprised at the letter, and mystified at the doubloon, and amazed and delighted to rush into the heroine's arms.

105. Limiting the Field. — One of the first steps in planning a story is to limit the field, to decide where to begin and where to end. Suppose you wish to base your narrative on material drawn from a week's trip in the woods or on the river. Your first impulse is to tell everything — how, the winter before, you talked about the trip, how you gathered your equipment, how you took a train and were met at the station by old Joshua, with his wagon, how you set up your tent the evening of arrival, how you went fishing one day and tramping the next, how you killed a bear the third, how your tent was blown down, how finally you had to strike camp, and come back home "tired but happy." This would be merely a diary or journal of the trip. The reader would be tired but *not* happy after reading it, because your desire to cover the entire ground would have given you no chance to develop situations in detail and reproduce the thrill of adventure in the woods. Now from this mass of experience choose some outstanding event, some series of facts which have a climax, such as killing the bear. Plunge into the story as quickly as possible; a bit of dialogue or a few rapid strokes of description will explain the situation; and when the bear has been killed, end as abruptly as you can. Having, then, cut off the superfluous material before and after the main episode, you will have room to develop that main episode; you will have a chance to put in vivid bits of description, passages of conversation by the characters, and at the most exciting parts of the story a specific account of the action. Good examples are *An Elephant Hunt*, by Theodore Roosevelt,[1] and *How I Caught Salmon in the Clackamas*, by Rudyard Kipling.[2]

[1] See *College Readings*, p. 430. [2] In *From Sea to Sea.*

NARRATION WITH PLOT

106. Plot. — An important thing to determine at the outset is whether your narrative is to be the simple recital of an incident or whether it is to have plot. The hunting story we have just mentioned is a narrative with a simple series of events forming a single line of action. The law of cause and effect operates along a straight line to a definite objective. Such a story may be represented thus:

But suppose that when you are following out your single line of action in pursuit of the bear, you cross the line of action of another set of people proceeding toward another objective, that the two lines react on each other and form a knot, that the knot has to be untied, and that finally the result is quite different from what either party expected. In this case we should have *plot*. Plot means the weaving together of two or more strands of action: a complication of events which influences the characters and is influenced by them. It may be illustrated thus:

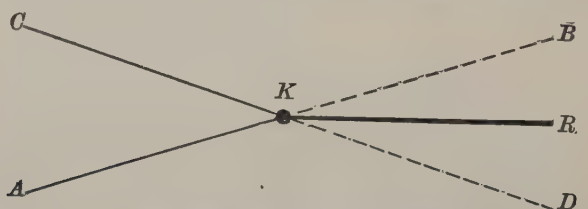

FIG. 1.—*AB* = one line of action; *CD* = another line of action; *K* = the knot; *R* = the result.

A love story is an example of plot in its most elementary form. A man is following the routine of life from day to

day. A woman is doing the same. Suddenly they meet. The result — a totally new line of action, readjustment of lives and characters. Study Stevenson's story *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*. What are the main lines of action? Where does the complication begin? How do the events modify character? The plots of most short stories and of all novels are more complicated than this. There are many lines of action intersecting each other, forming many knots, weaving themselves into tight complications, which are finally untied at the *dénouement* (the French word for untying). The weaving together of the strands in Thomas Hardy's story *The Three Strangers* may be pictured thus:

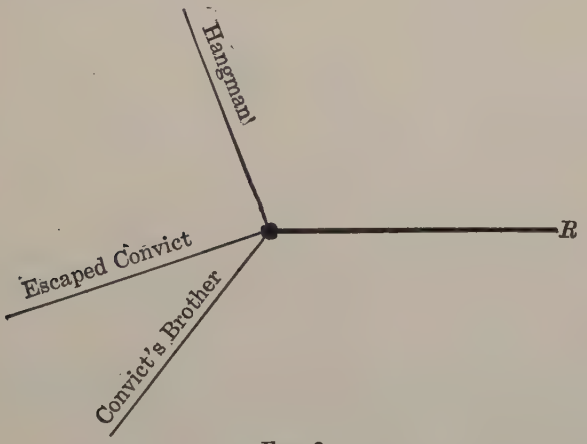

FIG. 2.

107. Unity of Impression. — Good narration, like description, has a "dominant tone." This is achieved by making all the elements of a story — action, charac-

ters, and setting — contribute to the production of a unified impression. Poe, who was a shrewd critic as well as a poet and story-writer, was the first to emphasize this idea. In his criticism of *Hawthorne's Tales* in 1842 he said:

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents — he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the out-bringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design.

In another essay, *The Philosophy of Composition*, Poe tells in detail how in writing *The Raven* he kept his eye steadily on the effect he wished to produce and how he chose all the details to heighten this effect:

I first established in my mind the climax or concluding query — that query to which 'Nevermore' should be in the last place an answer — that query in reply to which this word 'Nevermore' should involve the utmost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

Here, then, the poem may be said to have had its beginning, at the end where all works of art should begin, for it was here at this point of my preconsiderations that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil! prophet still if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us — by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'"

I made the night tempestuous, first to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage — it being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird — the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and, secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, Pallas, itself.

It is interesting to compare with these passages what Stevenson has to say on the same subject in one of his essays on the art of narrative, *A Humble Remonstrance:*

Let him [the writer] choose a motive, whether of character or passion; carefully construct his plot so that every incident is an illustration of the motive, and every property employed shall bear to it a near relation of congruity or contrast; . . . and allow neither himself in the narrative nor any character in the course of the dialogue, to utter one sentence that is not part and parcel of the business of the story or the discussion of the problem involved.[1]

Again, in a letter to Sir James Barrie he wrote:

The Little Minister ought to have ended badly; we all know it did; and we are infinitely grateful to you for the grace and good feeling with which you lied about it. If you had told the truth, I for one could never have forgiven you. As you had conceived and written the earlier parts, the truth about the end,

[1] In *Memories and Portraits.*

though indisputably true to fact, would have been a lie, or, what is worse, a discord in art. If you are going to make a book end badly, it must end badly from the beginning. Now your book began to end well. You let yourself fall in love with, and fondle, and smile at your puppets. Once you had done that your honor was committed — at the cost of truth to life you were bound to save them. It is the blot on *Richard Feverel*, for instance, that it begins to end well; and then tricks you and ends ill.[1]

108. The Fable. — The unity of the whole narrative is best seen in the *fable*. There the moral forms a kind of topic-sentence. The older critics, indeed, use the word *fable* regularly instead of *plot*. By *fable*, in this sense, they mean a unified action which could be reduced almost to a single topic-sentence. It is always well to test the plot with this idea of the fable as a unified action in mind. We shall then be less tempted to indulge in meaningless episodes. ("For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference is not an organic part of the whole." Aristotle, *Poetics*, ix. 1.)

109. Point of View. — One of the most valuable devices for producing unity of impression is the maintenance of the point of view. There are several varieties of point of view from which to choose.

1. *One character in first person, or autobiographic.* — You may identify yourself with one of your characters and tell the story through his mouth. This character may be the "hero" of the narrative, as in Anthony Hope's *Prisoner of Zenda*, which is told by Rudolf Rassendyll; or he may be a subordinate figure who participates in the action, as in the sequel of this story, *Rupert*

[1] *The Letters of R. L. Stevenson*, Vol. IV, p. 144.

of Hentzau, which is told by Fritz von Tarlenheim, one of Rudolf's friends. The result of adopting the autobiographic point of view is that the story becomes far more vivid and convincing. As we read such a story, "we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience."

But this great gain in vividness is accompanied by difficulties in technique. Absolute faithfulness to the point of view is essential. Consequently, you must be careful to picture things as they would appear to the eyes of the narrator. You cannot introduce details which the narrator could not know. If you introduce events which did not come under his personal observation, you should clearly indicate the fact by some such device as this:

> In order to a full understanding of what had occurred in the castle of Zenda it is necessary to supplement my account of what I myself saw and did on that night by relating briefly what I afterward learned from Fritz and from Mme. de Mauban.[1]

In *Treasure Island*, Jim Hawkins cannot tell about the landing of the captain's party from the *Hispaniola* while he is having his adventure with Ben Gunn on the island. For this reason Stevenson makes Dr. Livesey write three chapters conveying the needed information. A break in the point of view like this, however, is very unwise. It was undoubtedly the cause of the sudden stop in the flow of Stevenson's invention after he had been writing the first fifteen chapters at the rate of a chapter a day.

[1] Anthony Hope, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, Ch. xx.

Furthermore, you must make the narrator's thought and emotions true to his nature. You must make him tell his story in a style that will be appropriate to his race, rank, and education. There is, however, a literary convention whereby a narrator is allowed to wield a much more skillful style than he really could write. This is especially true in cases where the story is told by a youthful hero. Stevenson's David Balfour, who narrates *Kidnapped*, and Jim Hawkins, who narrates *Treasure Island*, write frequently in Stevenson's own picturesque style. On the other hand, Mark Twain's hero, Huckleberry Finn, expresses himself in a manner which is true to that young vagabond's nature, — though Mark Twain's own humor shines through Huck's rags.

It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house, too. I hadn't seen no house out in the country before that was so nice and had so much style. It didn't have an iron latch on the front door, nor a wooden one with a buckskin string, but a brass knob to turn, the same as houses in town. There warn't no bed in the parlor, nor a sign of a bed; but heaps of parlors in town has beds in them.[1]

2. *One character in third person.* — It often happens that instead of letting the chief character tell his story in his own words, the author himself writes the narrative but steadily looks at events through the eyes of this chief character. In Arnold Bennett's *Denry the Audacious* the author is interested in Denry himself — what Denry does, what ambitions and schemes rise in his mind, how the world impresses him.

[1] Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch. xvii.

"She can't eat me. She can't eat me!"

This was what he said to himself as he crossed the floor. People seemed to make a lane for him, divining his incredible intention. If he had not started at once, if his legs had not started of themselves, he would never have started. . . . But started he was, like a piece of clock-work that could not be stopped! In the grand crisis of his life something not himself, something more powerful than himself, jumped up in him and forced him to do things. Now for the first time he seemed to understand what had occurred within him in previous crises.

"Could I have this dance with you?" he demanded bluntly, but smiling and showing his teeth.[1]

The Sire de Malétroit's Door, by Stevenson,[2] is another example of the same method.

3. *The "omniscient" point of view* is the most common in short stories and novels. In this case the "all-seeing author" looks over the entire field of action as if from a mountain top. He can understand and explain the motives and emotions of all the characters. He can manipulate many figures, and weave together many strands. He can easily change his scene from place to place, and record conversations among various groups of persons. Examples of this "omniscient" point of view are many: Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*, Arnold Bennett's *Old Wives' Tale*.

The point of view to choose depends on the effect you wish to produce, the complexity of the plot, the number of characters involved.

[1] Arnold Bennett, *Denry the Audacious*, Ch. i (*College Readings*, 477 ff.).

[2] See *College Readings*, p. 502.

110. Characters. — Carlyle says: "Man is perennially interesting to man; nay, if we look strictly to it, there is nothing else interesting. How inexpressibly comfortable to know our fellow-creature; to see into him, understand his goings-forth, decipher the whole heart of his mystery." The portrayal of character is one of the most fascinating parts of story-writing. When once you have decided what the chief effect of the story is to be, you should exercise your skill in selecting the right number and the appropriate kind of characters to help in producing this effect. If the narrative is one of fact and you are recording real events in your own life or in history, you will find the figures ready made to your hand (see Froude's narrative of the death of Becket). But if you are inventing the story, you may adapt real men and women to your purpose, or you may create your characters.

111. Origin of Characters. — It is a common practice among authors to take salient traits of people they know and from these develop the characters of their stories. Often one character is a composite of several persons. Many of Scott's most famous figures were based on living originals. Rebecca in *Ivanhoe* was drawn from Rebecca Gratz of Philadelphia: Scott learned of her from Washington Irving; and on the publication of the novel wrote to Irving: "How do you like your Rebecca? Does the Rebecca I have pictured compare well with the pattern given?" Jeanie Deans in *The Heart of Midlothian* was drawn from Helen Walker, a Scottish girl who actually walked to London to secure the pardon of her sister. Other originals were as follows:

Characters	Originals
Di Vernon (*Rob Roy*)	Jane Cranstoun
Dandie Dinmont (*Guy Mannering*)	Willie Elliot / James Davidson
Meg Merrilies (*Guy Mannering*)	Jean Gordon
Colonel Mannering (*Guy Mannering*)	Sir Walter Scott himself
Jonathan Oldbuck (*The Antiquary*)	George Constable / John Ramsay
Edie Ochiltree (*The Antiquary*)	Andrew Gemmels
Old Mortality (*Old Mortality*)	Robert Paterson

The many historical figures who march across his pages were very carefully studied: Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Louis XI, Graham of Claverhouse.

Dickens's characters were not modelled upon their originals with the same realistic exactness as Scott's often were. The strangely fantastic and transforming mind of Dickens too often produced caricatures. His Harold Skimpole (in *Bleak House*) is based on Leigh Hunt, Mr. Micawber (in *David Copperfield*) on his own father, Mrs. Nickleby (in *Nicholas Nickleby*) on his mother, Mr. Fang (in *Oliver Twist*) on Mr. Laing, a harsh magistrate of Hatton-garden, Mrs. Pipchin (in *Dombey and Son*) on an old woman at whose house Dickens boarded in his bleak childhood. George Eliot painted many of her characters from life: Adam Bede (in *Adam Bede*) from her father, Dinah Morris from her aunt, Mrs. Poyser from her mother, Maggie Tulliver (in *The Mill on the Floss*) from herself. One of the most brilliant performances in the modelling of character is Stevenson's John Silver, who was developed from the author's friend, the poet William Ernest Henley. Of his method Stevenson says:

To take an admired friend of mine, to deprive him of all his finer qualities and higher graces of temperament, to leave him with nothing but his strength, his courage, his quickness, and his magnificent geniality, and to try to express these in terms of the culture of a raw tarpaulin, — such psychical surgery is, I think, a common way of "making character"; perhaps it is, indeed, the only way.

This method is emphasized in an illuminating letter[1] written by Mr. Will H. Low, the American painter, who was a friend of both Stevenson and Henley.

W. E. Henley *was* the original of John Silver undoubtedly, the "psychical surgery" being performed by the author according to his recipe, roughly remembered as something like: "Take your best friend and extract all his good qualities and the residue will give you a forceful villain." Stevenson's portraits were, however, not only the expression of his own mutable nature, but were composites as well of a number of different characters; he was not in any sense a realist according to my light — as we contended together during all his life. Consequently, while John Silver has many of Henley's traits, Stevenson's sense of a complete character led him, I believe, to add intuitively other and sympathetic traits until his figure lives "in the round" as we know it.

Among present-day novelists, Mr. H. G. Wells fills his books with real people. In *The New Machiavelli*, the pages are crowded with figures in English political life: Mr. and Mrs. Bailey are done from Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Webb, and Evesham from the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour. The example of these great masters of nar-

[1] Published in Introduction to *Stevenson's Treasure Island* by F. W. C. Hersey, 1911.

rative will stimulate you to look for interesting traits of character in the people around you.

112. Character Stories. — Before writing a narrative you should decide whether the characters are to exist chiefly for the sake of the action, as in Poe's *Gold Bug*, or whether the action is to occur chiefly for the sake of the characters, as in Stevenson's *Markheim*. If your main concern is with character, it is wise to choose a strongly marked or picturesque personality and place him in a crisis of his life which will bring out his real nature. This is done in Maupassant's *Coward* and *Mère Sauvage*, Bret Harte's *Outcasts of Poker Flat*, and Mrs. Wharton's *Crucial Instances*.

113. Methods of Portraying Character. — There are many methods of portraying character: choice of names, description, exposition, action, and dialogue.

114. Choice of Names. — Characters must be made to live, and the first step in giving them life is to honor them with a name, not an initial or a dash. Edward Thornton is a man, but E—— T—— may be a geometrical diagram. Names should be interesting, not commonplace and colorless. In an attempt to gives names which should reveal character, the older writers employed such names as Snake, Puff, Sir Fopling Flutter, Moll Cutpurse. To be sure, in an allegorical or satirical story or play, where the characters are merely personifications of virtues and vices, these type-names are helpful. In *The Pilgrim's Progress* no one would wish to change the names of Christian and Mr. Worldly-Wiseman. Except in cases like this, type-names have long gone out of fashion, and the modern practice is to use realistic names which are appropriate and suggestive. Dickens

was a master in suiting names to characters: recall Mrs. Gamp, Dick Swiveller, Quilp, Uriah Heep, Ham Peggotty, Chadband. He kept a long list of "available names" (printed in Forster's *Life of Dickens*, Book IX, Ch. vii) which he found in parish registers, charity lists, etc. Here are some of them: it is an entertaining pastime to imagine the characters which ought to bear these names: Chinkerble, Haggage, Chilby, Qucedy, Slyant, Meagles. Stevenson had a happy faculty in choosing names. What marvellous ones he gives the pirates in *Treasure Island:* Flint, Bones, Silver, Pew, Gunn — all cause a thrill of fear. Sometimes a name itself will evolve a character, and that in turn plunge us into a situation. In one of his letters Stevenson has raptures over the romantic associations which spring into his mind from the name of Jerry Abershaw, an English highwayman:

> Jerry Abershaw — O what a title! Jerry Abershaw: sir, it's a poem. The two most lovely words in English; and what a sentiment! Hark you, how the hoofs ring! Is this a blacksmith's? No, it's a wayside inn. Jerry Abershaw. "It was a clear, frosty morning, not 100 miles from Putney," etc. Jerry Abershaw. Jerry Abershaw. Jerry Abershaw.

And he says that Sixteen-string Jack troubled him awake and haunted his slumbers.

115. Description. — Elaborate descriptions of characters impede the action of a narrative. The more brief and vivid the description, the better. Dickens's "In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile" is worth more than pages of minute detail. You should avoid giving a catalogue of features and dress. Select some striking feature which individualizes a person and will

live in the memory, like Hewlett's magic phrase about Mary Queen of Scots — "her trick of the sidelong look." Hardy's description of Tess is unforgettable:

Her mouth he had seen nothing at all equal to on the face of the earth. To a young man with the least fire in him, that little upward lift in the middle of her top lip was distracting, infatuating, maddening. He had never before seen a woman's lips and teeth which forced upon his mind, with such persistent iteration, the old Elizabethan simile of roses filled with snow.

Frequently an author sums up the essence and effect of a character by a descriptive metaphor; for instance, George Eliot likens Gwendolen Harleth to a serpent, and Thackeray, Beatrix Esmond to a leopard. George Meredith is fond of putting these descriptive figures into the mouth of a clever character. "A dainty rogue in porcelain," is Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson's word on Clara Middleton in *The Egoist*. And her saying of Vernon Whitford: "'He is a Phœbus Apollo turned fasting friar,' painted the sunken brilliancy of the lean long-walker and scholar at a stroke."

Whenever possible it is well to describe characters in motion, for the effect of reality is heightened, and a reader is more interested in a person in motion than in one at rest. How the eye follows the movement in these passages:

Captain Brazenhead set his steel bonnet at a rake over one eye, chewed a straw, and cocked his sword point to the angle of a wren's tail.[1]

Her walk was like a yacht before the wind.[2]

[1] Maurice Hewlett, "Brazenhead the Great," in *Fond Adventures*.
[2] George Meredith, *Beauchamp's Career*.

Hans Breitmann paddled across the deck in his pink pyjamas, a cup of tea in one hand and a cheroot in the other, when the steamer was sweltering down the coast on her way to Singapur.[1]

The picture of Beatrix Esmond coming down the stairs is one of the most memorable in English fiction.[2]

116. Exposition. — Traits of character may be explained by expository statements. Direct analysis, if it is keen, will often flash upon your readers the essence of a person. But such passages of exposition should be brief and animated, and should not be massed together at the beginning of a story. Note how brightly Sir James Barrie expounds the character of this young man:

An impatient young man in knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket, all aglow with raindrops. Public school (and the particular one) is written on his forehead, and almost nothing else; he has scarcely yet begun to surmise that anything else may be required. He is modest and clear-eyed, and would ring for his tub in Paradise; (reputably athletic also), with an instant smile always in reserve for the antagonist who accidentally shins him. Whatever you, as his host, ask him to do, he says he would like to awfully if you don't mind his being a priceless duffer at it; his vocabulary is scanty, and in his engaging mouth "priceless" sums up all that is to be known of good or ill in our varied existence; at a pinch it would suffice him for most of his simple wants, just as one may traverse the continent with *Combien?* His brain is quite as good as another's, but as yet he has referred scarcely anything to it. He respects learning in the aged, but shrinks uncomfortably from it in contemporaries, as persons who have somehow failed. To him the proper way to look upon ability is as something we must all come to in the end. He has

[1] Rudyard Kipling, "Reingelder and the German Flag," in *Life's Handicap.*

[2] See also the portraits by Dickens in *College Readings,* pp. 408–410.

a nice taste in the arts that has come to him by the way of socks, spats, and slips, and of these he has a large and happy collection, which he laughs at jollily in public (for his sense of humour is sufficient), but in the privacy of his chamber he sometimes spreads them out like troutlet on the river's bank and has his quiet thrills of exultation.[1]

Kipling sometimes sums up a character in a single expository sentence:

There was Mulvaney, who had served with various regiments from Bermuda to Halifax, old in war, scarred, reckless, resourceful, and in his pious hours an unequalled soldier.[2]

117. Action. — The best way of portraying characters is to let them act and speak for themselves, and of the two "actions speak louder than words." Action is the life of narration. Devise episodes which shall make the characters reveal their nature. One of the greatest scenes in fiction, the scene in *Vanity Fair* where Rawdon Crawley knocks down Lord Steyne, reveals as by a searchlight the characters of three people.

Rawdon opened the door and went in. A little table with a dinner was laid out — and wine and plate. Steyne was hanging over the sofa on which Becky sate. The wretched woman was in a brilliant full toilette, her arms and all her fingers sparkling with bracelets and rings; and the brilliants on her breast which Steyne had given her. He had her hand in his, and was bowing over it to kiss it, when Becky started up with a faint scream as she caught sight of Rawdon's white face. At the next instant she tried a smile, a horrid smile, as if to welcome her husband:

[1] Sir James M. Barrie, "Rosalind," in *Half Hours.*

[2] Rudyard Kipling, "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," in *Life's Handicap.*

and Steyne rose up, grinding his teeth, pale, and with fury in his looks. . . .

But Rawdon Crawley, springing out, seized him by the neck-cloth, until Steyne, almost strangled, writhed, and bent under his arm. "You lie, you dog!" said Rawdon. "You lie, you coward and villain!" And he struck the peer twice over the face with his open hand, and flung him bleeding to the ground. It was all done before Rebecca could interpose. She stood there trembling before him. She admired her husband, strong, brave, and victorious.[1]

Becky's thrill of admiration for her husband at the moment of his vigorous, masculine revenge is superb. Thackeray was so moved by the absolute truth of this flash of character that he threw down his pen on writing these words with the cry "That is a stroke of genius!" It is interesting to hear Stevenson's comment on this episode: "If Rawdon Crawley's blows were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader." [2]

When your characters act, picture their action as vividly as possible by using picturesque verbs. Maurice Hewlett's verbs are keen, eager, and refreshing in their concreteness.

He made a rush for it, gained so the great hall, dizzied through it somehow, and out into the corridor. He flung himself at the stone stairs with the desperation of his last agony, half crawled, half swarmed up to the top (dragging his legs after him at the

[1] W. M. Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, Ch. liii.

[2] R. L. Stevenson, "A Gossip on Romance," in *Memories and Portraits*.

end, like a hare shot in the back), and finished his course to Spiridion's chamber on hands and knees.[1]

118. Dialogue. — "Stop making speeches, Andrew," says Lady Britomart in Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*. "This is not the place for them." And Andrew replies, "I have no other means of conveying my ideas."

In using dialogue to portray character you should be careful to make the speech of your people appropriate to their race, age, sex, and degree of education. Their language must be natural: they must not "talk like a book." Nor should they all talk alike, for they differ in education and native ability. To be sure, readers want an author to heighten the wit of his witty characters, and the stupidity of his stupid ones; but they will not tolerate too much falsification. They will not believe in a Maine guide who says, "If, however, you desire to shoot a moose." G. A. Birmingham, one of the most exhilarating writers of dialogue, hits this matter of naturalness very cleverly in the following passage. Callaghan, the gardener, is telling the Rev. J. J. Meldon, an irrepressible young Irish clergyman, about the meeting of an English judge and his niece.

"And then as soon as ever he seen her coming he put out his hand, and gripped a hold of Patsy Flaherty by the arm, and 'Stop, ye divil,' says he. 'Haven't ye had enough of battering that old screw for one day?' says he, 'and don't you see the young lady that's coming across the lawn there and her lepping like a two-year-old, so as the sight of her would make you supple and you crippled with the rheumatics?'"

"I know now," said Meldon, "that you're telling me a pack of

[1] Maurice Hewlett, *The Forest Lovers*, Ch. xxix.

lies from start to finish. There's not a judge in the world would say the words you're putting into that one's mouth. It isn't the way judges talk, nor the least like it. You oughtn't to try and invent things, Callaghan. You can't do it. You haven't got any faculty for dramatic probability in characterization. . . . The judge wouldn't have spoken that way to Patsy Flaherty. If he'd wanted to have the car stopped, he'd have said, 'Pull up for a minute, my good man,' or words to that effect."

"Well," said Callaghan, "it might have been that he said. How was I to hear what passed between them when I was halfway across the lawn at the time scuffing the path with my hoe?"[1]

A person's character, mental ability, and attitude toward life may be shown in his talk. For admirable examples of characterizing dialogue read the plays of Sir Arthur Pinero, Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy, Lady Gregory, and John M. Synge. *The Dolly Dialogues*, by Anthony Hope, contain some of the most charming and clever talk in English literature. Other masters of characterizing dialogue are Thomas Hardy, in the talk of the peasants in his Wessex novels; G. A. Birmingham in his humorous stories of Irish life; Leonard Merrick in his stories of French Bohemian artists and of cultivated English people (his *Dead Violets* is a masterpiece of searching and veracious dialogue).

Besides portraying character, good dialogue propels the story onward, develops the plot, explains situations, and gives animation and reality to the whole.

The management of "stage directions" needs special attention. You should not keep repeating "he said," "she said," which become intolerably monotonous.

[1] G. A. Birmingham, *The Simpkins Plot*, Ch. xvi.

Vary the phrase, use synonyms of "say," and choose verbs that denote the tone of voice or manner of speaking. In *The Dolly Dialogues*, three people utter the same word in different tones:

"*Dull!*" gasped Miss Phyllis.
"*Dull!*" murmured Mrs. Hilary.
"*Dull!*" chuckled Hilary.

Figures of speech may be used to describe the tone or manner, as in this case:

"Why are you here, woman?" came sharp as sleet.[1]

If you invent picturesque phrases, you should not ride them to death. Monotony is more marked when it is bizarre. For example, "snapped" and "rapped" are vigorous now and then, but in the Fu-Manchu stories produce this sort of "snappy fiction":

"Do you hear anything, Petrie?" he rapped. . . .
"Come on, Petrie!" he snapped. . . .
"Eh?" rapped Smith, turning upon him. . . .
"Now, Petrie," rapped Smith, glancing around.
"I mean it!" he rapped. . . .
"Why not an empress, Petrie?" he rapped. . . .
"So am I," snapped Smith grimly.

"Stage directions" include also gestures, facial expression, and bits of action accompanying speeches. How much this little phrase at the beginning of *The Prisoner of Zenda* tells about the time and situation:

"My dear Rose," I answered, laying down my egg-spoon, "why in the world should I do anything?"

[1] Maurice Hewlett, *The Forest Lovers*, Ch. xix.

The "business" in the following dialogue is so true that the little boy and girl actually live before our eyes.

"Oh, you know," returned the boy, stepping irregularly, to make the tips of his toes come on the cracks of the sidewalk. There was another pause, during which Piggy picked up a pebble, and threw it at a bird in a tree. His heart was sinking rapidly.

"Oh, that rose?" said his Heart's Desire, turning full upon him with the enchantment of her childish eyes. "Why, here it is in my grammar. I'm taking it to keep with the others. Why?"

"Oh, nuthin' much," replied the boy. "I bet you can't do this," he added, as he glowed up into her eyes from an impulsive handspring.[1]

119. Dialect. — A few words should be said about dialect, that is, the form of speech peculiar to a district, or class of people. Sometimes stories are told entirely in dialect: Kipling's Mulvaney stories are in Irish, and Joel Chandler Harris's Uncle Remus tales in negro dialect. Unless you are very familiar with a dialect, you had better not attempt to write it. Its value depends on its reality. There is hardly anything that makes a character so actual as the faithful rendering of his dialect. When we hear the New England stage-driver speak in Miss Jewett's *Winter Courtship*, we have no doubt that he is alive.

"I do' know's I said, Mis' Tobin." . . .

"'T would a come handy later on, I declare, bein' 's you went an' had such a passel o' gals to clothe an' feed."

[1] W. A. White, "The King of Boyville," in *The Real Issue.*

But your zeal for accuracy in reproducing sounds must not lead you into unintelligible spelling. After all, a reader must read, and if he can't, he will stop.

120. Dialogue in Notebook. — Follow Synge's practice (see § 176) and record striking phrases and speeches which you hear in conversation. Bernard Shaw audaciously imagines Shakespeare taking down picturesque phrases from the lips of people he met, phrases which appear in his plays.

THE BEEFEATER. You judge too much by the Court, sir. There, indeed, you may say of frailty that its name is woman.

SHAKESPEARE (*pulling out his tablets*). Prithee say that again: that about frailty: the strain of music. . . . (*Writing*) "Frailty: thy name is woman!" (*Repeating it affectionately*) "Thy name is woman."

THE BEEFEATER. Well, sir, it is but four words. Are you a snapper-up of such unconsidered trifles?

SHAKESPEARE (*eagerly*). Snapper-up of — (*he gasps*) Oh! Immortal phrase! (*He writes it down.*) This man is a greater than I.[1]

There is no doubt that Shakespeare had alert ears for full-flavored speech. Dickens, we know, took delight in observing tricks of tongue. Micawber's flourishes of language are based on the rhetorical exuberance of Dickens's own father. In his letters, Charles was very fond of quoting these paternal sentences:

"We are very sorry to lose the benefit of his advice —, or, as my father would say, to be deprived, to a certain extent, of the concomitant advantages, whatever they may be, resulting from

[1] George Bernard Shaw, *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*.

his medical skill, such as it is, and his professional attendance, in so far as it may be so considered."

"And I must express my tendency to believe that his longevity is (to say the least of it) extremely problematical." [1]

This grandiloquent style rolls from the lips of Wilkins Micawber:

"Emma, my love, my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles is so obliging as to solicit, in my ear, that he should have the privilege of ordering the ingredients necessary to the composition of a moderate portion of that Beverage which is peculiarly associated, in our minds, with the Roast Beef of Old England. I allude to — in short, Punch." [2]

121. Setting. — Setting is the place of the action. The reality of a story is not complete unless the reader knows that it occurs in a definite region — the hill country of India, a New England town, the seacoast of Scotland, a California mining camp. This background should harmonize with the motive of the narrative and should set off the characters. Stevenson was keenly aware of the relation of background and action.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, call up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the

[1] John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, Book VI, Ch. vii.

[2] Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, Ch. lvii.

genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. [1]

You recall that in writing *The Merry Men*, he says, "I began with the feeling of one of those islands on the west coast of Scotland, and I gradually developed the story to express the sentiment with which the coast affected me." Action and characters often spring from the locality, are shaped by it and dominated by it. In a very true sense, we are children of the earth. In Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* and *House of Seven Gables*, the New England setting controls both events and people; in his *Marble Faun* the spell of the eternal Rome casts its golden influence over all; in Joseph Conrad's *Almayer's Folly*, the Oriental landscape subordinates the story. But the greatest master of the triumphant background is Thomas Hardy. In his many novels of Wessex (Dorset and Somerset on the south coast of England) men and women live lives moulded by the force of Nature.

The setting of *The Return of the Native* is the most famous example of Hardy's treatment of environment. This setting is Egdon Heath, a vast tract of waste land. Egdon Heath tyrannizes over the lives of the natives to such an extent that it has been called the chief character of the story. The superb narrative opens with a descrip-

[1] R. L. Stevenson, *A Gossip on Romance.*

tion of this grim hero. The accompanying photographs taken during a trip through this region will illustrate Hardy's magical skill in making words produce the feeling one has in looking at the actual heath.

A Saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an installment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come; darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the dawn; then, and only then, did it tell its true tale. The spot was, indeed, a near relation of night, and when night showed itself, an apparent tendency to gravitate together could be perceived in its shades and the scene. The sombre stretch of rounds and hollows seemed

EGDON HEATH

to rise and meet the evening gloom in pure sympathy, the heath exhaling darkness as rapidly as the heavens precipitated it. And so the obscurity in the air and the obscurity in the land closed together in a black fraternization towards which each advanced halfway.

The place became full of a watchful intentness now; for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crisis of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis — the final overthrow. . . .

It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature — neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame; but, like man, slighted and enduring: and withal, singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived far apart solitude seemed to look out of its countenance.

Along an aged highway walked an old man. . . . Before him stretched the long, laborious road, dry, empty, and white. It was quite open to the heath on each side, and bisected that vast dark surface like the parting line on a head of black hair, diminishing and bending away on the furthest horizon.[1]

Study the admirable phrases which enforce the dominant tone of the heath: "embrowned itself moment by moment," "an installment of night," "retard the dawn, sadden noon," "the sombre stretch," "slighted and enduring," "singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony." Note the figure "bisected that vast dark surface like the parting line on a head of black hair," which a glance at the picture shows is a masterpiece of careful observation. Thus close to the soil is

[1] Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*, Ch. i.

Hardy's "local color." His work should be emphasized, for it offers the most stimulating examples of the relation of setting to events and characters. It is exhilarating to make a walking tour through the Hardy country, reading the stories on the scenes of action. But since that is possible for very few of us, the next best thing is to read the novels and look up the backgrounds in Hermann Lea's *Thomas Hardy's Wessex*, which is equipped with two hundred and forty pictures from photographs and a map of Wessex. The dairy farms, manor houses, churches, inns, roads, and villages which figure in his stories are done from the real. A few more examples will be interesting. In *Tess of the D' Urbervilles* the scene of the tragic honeymoon of Tess and Angel Clare is "the mouldy old habitation" of Wool Bridge — called by Hardy Wellbridge. Later the story moves to Kingsbere, where in the church is the ancient tomb of the D'Urbervilles. In the dusk, Tess enters the church, and, in a highly dramatic way, comes face to face with Alec D'Urberville, who had been the evil genius of her life.

Within the window were the tombs of the family, covering in their dates several centuries. They were canopied, altar-shaped, and plain; their carvings being defaced and broken; their brasses torn from the matrices, the rivet-holes remaining like marten-holes in a sand-cliff. Of all the reminders that she had ever received that her people were socially extinct there was none so forcible as this spoliation.

She drew near to a dark stone on which was inscribed:

Ostium sepulchri antiquae familiae D'Urbervilla.

Tess did not read Church-Latin like a Cardinal, but she knew that this was the door of her ancestral sepulchre, and that the

THE D'URBERVILLE WINDOW AND TOMB
Bere Regis Church (Kingsbere)

WOOL-BRIDGE HOUSE

"The great Elizabethan bridge gives the place half its name. . . . Once portion of a fine manorial residence, and the property and seat of a D'Urberville, but since its partial demolition a farm-house"

tall knights of whom her father had chanted in his cups lay inside.

She musingly turned to withdraw, passing near an altar-tomb, the oldest of them all, on which was a recumbent figure. In the dusk she had not noticed it before, and would hardly have noticed it now but for an odd fancy that the effigy moved. As soon as she drew close to it she discovered all in a moment that the figure was a living person; and the shock to her sense of not having been alone was so violent that she was quite overcome, and sank down nigh to fainting, not however till she had recognized Alec D'Urberville in the form.

He leapt off the slab and supported her.[1]

Observe how faithfully Hardy paints the details of the old tomb, and chooses a figure which appeals to the eye: "their brasses torn from the matrices, the rivet-holes remaining like marten-holes in a sand-cliff."

An author who has much in common with Hardy is Eden Phillpotts, who writes of the rugged dramas enacted among the tors and woodlands of Dartmoor in Devonshire. In *Children of the Mist*, *The River*, *The Secret Woman*, and many other novels, he enforces the fact that locality shapes character and determines destinies. Just as Egdon Heath is the hero of Hardy's *Return of the Native*, the River Dart is the heroine of Phillpotts's *River*. Phillpotts's attitude toward background is set forth in his Foreword to *Widecombe Fair:*

If I deem a forest or river, a wild space, a hill top, or the changing apparitions of inanimate nature as vital as the adventures of men and women, and as much a part of the material which I handle, then to these things must be apportioned the significance I desire for them. If I choose to make a river a protagonist, or

[1] Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Ch. lii.

lift a forest, in its unknowable attributes, into a presence more portentous than the human beings who move within it, none has the right to deny me. . . . To me, then, the phenomena of man's environment are as interesting as man himself.[1]

For an example of his closeness to actuality see the description and picture of the Vale of Widecombe, p. 124.

One of the most famous books that exhale the atmosphere of place is Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, a romance of Exmoor in North Devon. "*Lorna Doone* to a Devonshire man is as good as clotted cream, almost!" The Doone Valley — the fastness of the outlaw Doones — the Badgery Water, which flows through it, the Valley of the Rocks, Oare, Brendon, Malmsmead, may all be visited. Blackmore, to be sure, exaggerated the slopes of the valley into dismally precipitous cliffs to heighten the effect. But as to the rightness of placing the story of the Doones in this wild glen there is no question. The description, in the words of John Ridd, runs thus:

And now for the first time I was amazed at the appearance of the Doones' stronghold, and understood its nature. . . . The chine of highland whereon we stood curved to the right and left of us, keeping about the same elevation, and crowned with trees and brush-wood. At about half a mile in front of us, but looking as if we could throw a stone to strike any man upon it, another crest just like our own bowed around to meet it; but failed by reason of two narrow clefts, of which we could only see the brink. One of these clefts was the Doone-gate, with a portcullis of rock above it, and the other was the chasm by which I had once made entrance. Betwixt them, where the hills fell back as in a perfect oval, traversed by the winding water, lay a

[1] Eden Phillpotts, *Widecombe Fair*, Foreword.

The Dome Valley

HEATHER-CLAD HILL ON EGDON HEATH

"This bossy projection of earth above its natural level occupied the loftiest ground of the loneliest height that the heath contained. . . . It formed the pole and axis of this heathery world."

bright green valley, rimmed with sheer black rock, and seeming to have sunken bodily from the bleak, rough heights above.[1]

Stevenson, as we should expect from the quotation on page 188, was quick to seize the spirit of place and fuse it with action and character into gratifying unity. Witness *The Merry Men*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, *Kidnapped*, *The Ebb Tide*. *Kidnapped*, a story of the Scottish Highlands, is so redolent of the soil that "the wind seems to turn the pages of that swift record, and the smell of the heather comes with it."[2] In his stories we always know what the weather is. Take the episode of the duel in *The Master of Ballantrae:*

> There was no breath stirring: a windless stricture of frost had bound the air; and as we went forth in the shine of the candles, the blackness was like a roof over our heads. Never a word was said; there was never a sound but the creaking of our steps along the frozen path. The cold of the night fell about me like a bucket of water.
>
> "Here is the place," said the master. "Set down the candles."
>
> I did as he bade me, and presently the flames went up as steady as in a chamber in the midst of the frosted trees.[3]

In *Treasure Island* the salt sea air is always in our nostrils, and the booming of the surf in our ears. The account of Jim's first view of Treasure Island is masterly. The details of color, form, sound — "grey-colored woods,"

[1] R. D. Blackmore, *Lorna Doone*, Ch. xv. You should not fail to look up the many pictures of the region in the illustrated editions of *Lorna Doone:* one edited by H. Snowden Ward (Harper), another published by J. C. Winston Co.

[2] C. T. Copeland, "Robert Louis Stevenson," in *Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1895.

[3] R. L. Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*, Ch. iv.

"the spires of naked rock" — strike in the mind the dominant tone of gloomy foreboding.

A few practical hints about setting will be useful. You should make the passages of description — of landscape, houses, rooms, etc. — as brief as possible. Include only the necessary and most significant details. Again, do not give too long accounts of background at the beginning. Work in the setting as you go along, unless the requirements of the story make another method better. For example, the setting of a detective story may need careful expository treatment, supplemented by a diagram, as is sometimes the case in the Sherlock Holmes stories. You can at times put effective bits of description into the mouths of your characters. Note the speech quoted from Synge, § 176. Above all, avoid "fine writing" and flowery language. Always bear in mind this remark of Henry James:

> I cannot imagine composition existing in a series of blocks, nor conceive, in any novel worth discussing at all, of a passage of description that is not in its intention narrative.

The most important illustrated books on "literary geography," *i.e.* the background of famous writers, are as follows: you will find them very enjoyable.

Literary Geography, William Sharp. London, 1904. This has chapters on the country of Stevenson, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, the Brontës, George Meredith, and others.

The Real Dickens Land, H. Snowden Ward. London, 1904.

In Dickens's London, F. Hopkinson Smith. New York, 1914.

George Eliot: Scenes and People in her Novels, Charles S. Olcott. New York, 1910.

Lorna Doone. J. C. Winston Co., New York.

Lorna Doone. Dooneland Edition by H. Snowden Ward. London and New York, 1908.

The New York of the Novelists, A. B. Maurice. New York, 1917. With pictures of places that figure in stories by Washington Irving, Henry James, O. Henry, Richard Harding Davis, and others.

The Country of Sir Walter Scott, Charles S. Olcott. London, 1913.

Thomas Hardy's Wessex, Hermann Lea. London, 1913.

122. Coherence. — The general conduct of a narrative ought not to be difficult, because you can rely on the chronological order of events. Coherence in narration is far more simple than in exposition, argument, or description. A good story will tell itself. There are, however, several faults to guard against.

1. *Digressions.* — Do not let your story run off the track. Sometimes there is a temptation to wander far afield in following the "coherence of association." But if the associated facts and details that come flocking into the mind do not bear on the main purpose, they should be firmly ignored. Avoid making comments on your story as you go along. Thackeray's habit of holding up his narrative to moralize on the characters is admired by many readers, but it should be remembered that this method is successful in very few hands.

2. *Backing and filling.* — Do not let your story double back on itself. If events occur in the order of 1, 2, 3, 4, do not tell them in the order of 2, 1, 4, 3. In novels which are crowded with many characters and interests, it is as difficult to keep them marching on as it is to drive sheep.

3. *Clumsy explanations.* — Do not halt the narrative to explain certain relations between characters or certain facts about the setting or topography which should have been prepared for. Stevenson vigorously criticizes a passage in Scott on account of this fault. Understand, however, that he admires the episode itself.

In *Guy Mannering*, again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

"'I remember the tune well,' he says, 'though I cannot guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.' He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel. . . . She immediately took up the song —

'Are these the links of Forth, she said;
Or are they the crooks of Dee,
Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head
That I so fain would see?'

"'By heaven!' said Bertram, 'it is the very ballad.'" . . .

The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: " a damsel, who, close behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shambling sentence. It is not merely bad English, or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.[1]

[1] R. L. Stevenson, *A Gossip on Romance.*

123. Movement. — Movement is the rate of speed, or pace. In some stories the nature of the events, people, and setting requires a slow pace; in others, a rapid one.

1. Methods of producing slow pace:
   a. Use of many details.
   b. Long descriptions.
   c. Analysis of character or motives.
   d. Dialogue for its own sake — which does not advance the action.
   e. Leisurely style, composed of rather long sentences and many words.
2. Methods of producing rapid pace:
   a. Selection of only telling details.
   b. Suggestion rather than enumeration of details.
   c. Dialogue, crisp in itself and winging the story on.
   d. Concise style, composed of rather short sentences.
   e. Graphic words of high carrying power.

In general your motto should be "Get on." Don't treat all things with equal emphasis; develop those scenes which are striking.

124. Emphasis. — The most important methods of securing emphasis in a narrative are a good beginning and ending, climax, and surprise.

125. Effective Beginning. — We have already said something about beginning in the section on limiting the field (§ 105). You should begin as abruptly as possible: avoid a long running start. It has been wittily said, "The way to pick up a story is the way to pick up a puppy-dog — a little in front of the middle." It is often necessary to clear the ground for the action to follow by a short exposition, or by rapid painting of background. But even while you are doing this, you

should catch the reader's attention by sounding the key-note or rousing his curiosity. Note these brief expository beginnings by Kipling:

Mrs. Hawksbee was sometimes nice to her own sex. Here is a story to prove this; and you can believe just as much as you please.[1]

Never praise a sister to a sister, in the hope of your compliments reaching the proper ears, and so preparing the way for you later on. Sisters are women first, and sisters afterwards; and you will find that you do yourself harm.[2]

East of Suez, some hold, the direct control of Providence ceases; Man being there handed over to the power of the Gods and Devils of Asia, and the Church of England, Providence only exercising an occasional and modified supervision in the case of Englishmen.[3]

Of the descriptive beginning this opening of one of Hewlett's stories of the Italian Renaissance is a fine example:

Up at Fiesole, among the olives and chestnuts which cloud the steeps, the magnificent Lorenzo was entertaining his guests on a morning in April. The olives were just whitening to silver; they stretched in a tumbling sea down the slope. Beyond lay Florence, misty and golden; and round about were the mossy hills, cut sharp and definite against a grey-blue sky, printed with starry buildings and silver ranks of cypress.[4]

Dialogue makes an effective beginning, but it requires skill to carry on the narrative from that point without

[1] Rudyard Kipling, "The Rescue of Pluffles," in *Plain Tales from the Hills.*

[2] Rudyard Kipling, "False Dawn," in *Plain Tales from the Hills.*

[3] Rudyard Kipling, "The Mark of the Beast," in *Life's Handicap.*

[4] Maurice Hewlett, "Quattrocentisteria," in *Earthwork out of Tuscany.*

doubling back. Here are some excellent dialogue beginnings:

"I can assure you," said I, "that it will take a very tangible ghost to frighten me." And I stood up before the fire with my glass in my hand.

"It is your own choosing," said the man with the withered arm, and glanced at me askance.[1]

"But if it be a girl?"

"Lord of my life, it cannot be. I have prayed for so many nights, and sent gifts to Sheikh Badl's shrine so often, that I know God will give us a son — a man-child that shall grow into a man." [2]

126. Effective Ending. — The ending should be swift and impressive. Never use the "tired but happy" ending, and never add a postscript. The conclusion is part and parcel of the climax, the surprise, the *dénouement* to which the narrative has been progressing. Quotations of endings without the context are not very clear: you should look up the admirable conclusions of the stories of Poe, Kipling, and Leonard Merrick. Study the endings of O. Henry's *Mammon and the Archer*, Mary Wilkins Freeman's *Gala Dress*, Stevenson's *Sire de Malétroit's Door*,[3] Sarah Orne Jewett's *Winter Courtship*, and Kipling's *Story of Muhammad Din*. Try to phrase the very last words so that they will echo in the memory:

I had walled the monster up within the tomb! [4]

[1] H. G. Wells, "The Red Room," in *The Country of the Blind*.
[2] Rudyard Kipling, "Without Benefit of Clergy," in *Life's Handicap*.
[3] All in *College Readings*.
[4] E. A. Poe, *The Black Cat*.

"A little bit of string — a little bit of string — see here it is, M'sieu' le Maire." [1]

"Pieces of eight! pieces of eight!" [2]

Owing to the delay, the violets, now that they reached her, were quite dead.[3]

Then the door slammed, and Lizer Chope was in the windy street.[4]

127. Climax. — Climax is the highest point in a narrative, the goal toward which the action steadily climbs, and in a story with plot, the place where the various lines of action reach the moment of greatest tension and discharge. Climax is the firing of the gun. Reread at this time the comment on the climax of the *Death of Becket* (§ 97). The position of the climax is at the end. It is emphasized by rapid action and vivid details. And it may be thrown into greater relief by suspense, that is, by retarding the action just before it in order to keep the reader guessing. Often the point in suspense is not the outcome, but the means by which it is to be brought about. In stories of which the main interest is characterization, this is especially true. In stories of action it is not so frequently the case.

128. Surprise. — Climax does not necessarily include surprise. In certain narratives we foresee the end, as in Poe's *Cask of Amontillado*, and our interest lies in watching the artful progress of events. The "surprise story,"

[1] Guy de Maupassant, *A Piece of String.*

[2] R. L. Stevenson, *Treasure Island.*

[3] Leonard Merrick, "Dead Violets," in *The Man Who Understood Women.*

[4] Arthur Morrison, "Lizerunt," in *Tales of Mean Streets.*

on the other hand, keeps us in suspense throughout and thrills us by a sudden twist at the end. Detective stories are constructed on this principle; for example, the Sherlock Holmes stories by Conan Doyle. Other notable surprises are *Marjorie Daw*, by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, *The Monkey's Paw* and *Captain Rogers* by W. W. Jacobs, *The Necklace* by Maupassant. Two writers who employ this method most adroitly are O. Henry (see *Mammon and the Archer*) and Leonard Merrick. Merrick has such polished technique and such variety of effect that you should read his books whenever you can get them. His extraordinary ability to build up crisis upon crisis and then surprise us in spite of ourselves at the end, is well illustrated in *The Tragedy of a Comic Song*, where there are six crises, one after another.

129. Titles. — A good title should be brief, specific, original, and alluring. The purpose of giving a story a distinctive name is to summarize the main idea and to pique the curiosity, as in *The Phantom 'Rickshaw* and *The Cop and the Anthem*. The phrasing of a title brings into play all our literary expertness. Here are a few admirable examples:

The Gold Bug — Poe.
The Suicide Club — Stevenson.
Mammon and the Archer — O. Henry.
The Dolly Dialogues — Anthony Hope.
At the End of the Passage — Kipling.
Wireless — Kipling.
Without Benefit of Clergy — Kipling.
Spanish Gold — G. A. Birmingham.
A Slip under the Microscope — H. G. Wells.
The Valley of Spiders — H. G. Wells.

The Tragedy of a Comic Song — Leonard Merrick.
Whispers about Women — Leonard Merrick.
Dead Violets — Leonard Merrick.

A few " don't's " will be helpful:

1. Don't be vague. *An Automobile Accident, A Day in the Woods, On a Farm, A Narrow Escape,* are far too general and colorless to be of any interest.

2. Don't be trite. Don't use parts of trite quotations, like *Born to Blush Unseen; Hope Springs Eternal; To Err is Human;* or hackneyed forms like *John Ward, Preacher; The (Something) of (Somebody); The (Someone) Who (Did Something); The Passing of* ——.

3. Don't be sensational and alliterative after the manner of the dime novels: *Seven Diamond Skulls; or, The Secret City of Siam.*

4. Don't be lengthy. A long title is hard to remember and difficult to pronounce: for example, *Dionysus, the Weaver's Heart's Dearest; My Double and How He Undid Me.*

EXERCISES

1. Tell an actual experience without plot. Read Jowett's remark about Dr. Johnson's meeting with Wilkes, p. 74.

2. Rewrite an episode in a dime novel.

3. Work up a story from an item in the newspapers.

4. Take an old fable and retell it in terms of modern life.

5. Try your hand at writing stories from these beginnings, which Stevenson jotted down in one of his letters (to W. E. Henley, October, 1884):

Chapter I

The night was damp and cloudy, the ways foul. The single horseman, cloaked and booted, who pursued his way across

Willesden Common, had not met a traveller, when the sound of wheels. . .

Chapter I

"Yes, sir," said the old pilot, "she must have dropped into the bay a little afore dawn. A queer craft she looks."

"She shows no colours," returned the young gentleman, musingly.

"They're a-lowering of a quarter-boat, Mr. Mark," resumed the old salt. "We shall soon know more of her."

"Ay," replied the young man called Mark, "and here, Mr. Seadrift, comes your sweet daughter Nancy tripping down the cliff."

"God bless her kind heart, sir," ejaculated old Seadrift.

Chapter I

The notary, Jean Rossignol, had been summoned to the top of a great house in the Isle St. Louis to make a will; and now, his duties finished, wrapped in a warm roquelaure and with a lantern swinging from one hand, he issued from the mansion on his homeward way. Little did he think what strange adventures were to befall him! . . .

6. Devise an effective conclusion for a story which the instructor stops reading at an exciting point. Excellent stories for such a purpose are:

O. Henry: "A Municipal Report" (in *Strictly Business*).

Kenneth Grahame: "The Burglars" (in *The Golden Age*).

R. L. Stevenson: "Tale of the Explosive Bomb" (in *The Dynamiter*).

7. State the plots of a few stories in their lowest terms. Try to sum up the plot in one sentence.

8. Read Poe's doctrine about unity in stories (p. 168) and then test one of his own stories in the light of this doctrine; for example, *The Cask of Amontillado*.

9. Test other stories by Poe's doctrine: for example, O. Henry's *Mammon and the Archer*, Stevenson's *Sire de Malétroit's Door*, Mary Wilkins Freeman's *Gala Dress* (all in *College Readings*).

10. Imagine yourself in a famous historical event and narrate it from the autobiographic point of view.

11. Analyze ten stories and give the following facts about them:

1. The dominant character.
2. The plot.
3. The order of events.
4. The point of view.
5. The setting.

12. Exercises in Characterization:

1. Select names for

   A miser; a young poet; an elderly New England spinster; a very successful, hard-headed business man; a romantic school girl; a young Englishman, fond of athletics, graduate of Oxford.

2. Summarize in ten or fifteen words each the characters that you would expect to go with the following names: John Stone, Enoch Beane, Lily Dale, Plantagenet Palliser, Silas Lapham, Basil March, Arthur Fletcher, Amos Headston, Mrs. Flinks, Ravender, Joad, Clarriker, Glibbery, Plornish, Rosa Dartle.

13. By what methods are the characters portrayed in *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*, *A Gala Dress*, *Mammon and the Archer* (all in *College Readings*)?

14. Write a story in which there is a great deal of dialogue. (See *The Dolly Dialogues* by Anthony Hope.)

15. Write a few short studies in dialect: choose dialects with which you have first-hand acquaintance.

16. Write out speeches you have taken down from real conversation.

17. Take a passage of dialogue in a magazine story and make a list of the traits of character revealed.

18. Read the introduction of *The Green Door*, by O. Henry (in *The Four Million*) and be on the watch for adventures.

19. Taking Stevenson's suggestion — "There is a fitness in events and places. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted" — write a story which grows out of a place with which you are familiar.

20. Discuss the appropriateness of the setting in various stories, such as *The Sire de Malétroit's Door, The Pursuit of the Outlaw, A Gala Dress* (all in *College Readings*).

21. Discuss the value of this introduction:

> Probably I had the most thrilling experience summer before last that I will ever have in my life. Inasmuch as it concerns itself with a bear, I feel like apologizing, since so many bear stories have been written. That it is true, and therefore may be of interest to some others, is my only excuse for offering it.

22. Discuss this estimate of O. Henry:

> "I hear O. Henry is being used in the schools and the colleges. I hear that he is held up as a model by critics and professors of English. The effect of this must be pernicious. It cannot but be pernicious to spread the idea that O. Henry is a master of the short story. O. Henry did not write the short story. O. Henry wrote the expanded anecdote."
>
> "What is the difference between them?" the reporter asked.
>
> "It's hard to define the difference," Mrs. Gerould replied, "but it is impossible to confuse the two forms. In a short story there are situation, suspense, and climax. O. Henry gives the reader climax — nothing else!"

23. Why is *Treasure Island* a better title than the original one, *The Sea Cook?*

24. Which is the better title for Hawthorne's story — *The Marble Faun* or the English version *Transformation?*

25. Select other titles for these stories:

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow — Washington Irving.
A Municipal Report — O. Henry.
A Humble Romance — Mary Wilkins Freeman.
The Great Stone Face — Hawthorne.
A Winter Courtship — Sarah Orne Jewett.
The Ambitious Guest — Hawthorne.
Markheim — R. L. Stevenson.
A Lodging for the Night — R. L. Stevenson.

Part III

STRUCTURE

CHAPTER VI

PARAGRAPHS

130. Definition. — A paragraph is a group of sentences which together develop a single topic. This single topic — a fact, an opinion, an event — may be one step in the course of a whole composition, or it may be a complete brief article in itself. A paragraph is composed of sentences just as a sentence is composed of words. The sentences in a paragraph are arranged according to the principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis. The application of these principles, however, depends upon our purpose in writing. If we are explaining facts, the method of composing the steps, or paragraphs, may be quite different from that when we are narrating events. The length of the paragraphs will also vary. The narrative paragraph is ordinarily shorter than the expository. For instance, in *Kidnapped* (Chapter xx, "The Flight in the Heather") Stevenson has thirty-four paragraphs, not counting the direct speeches, in ten pages; whereas in his essay on *Some Portraits by Raeburn* he has eight paragraphs in ten pages. In considering the structure of paragraphs, then, let us note the variations in the different kinds of writing.

UNITY

131. Unity in Exposition and Argument. — Unity in the construction of paragraphs cannot be attained merely by writing a succession of unified sentences. Unity of the paragraph exists only when the paragraph can be summarized in a single sentence. And this unity can ordinarily be secured only by making a careful plan in which there are headings of at least two different degrees of importance. Suppose, for instance, that we wish to compose a single paragraph. We cannot put together sentences about the poetry of Tennyson, the advantages of sleeping out of doors, and the genius of Wagner, because — although each of these sentences might be a unit — the series of sentences would not together make up any larger unit. Twelve inches make a foot, and sixteen ounces make a pound, and twenty-four sheets of paper make a quire; but a quire, added to a pound, plus a foot, makes nothing but nonsense. A paragraph, therefore, cannot be a unit unless its component parts have something in common.

Nor can a paragraph have unity if its ideas, although of the same general sort, together make only a fraction of the larger idea which they are intended to group together. For example, suppose I have a group of sentences, of which the first is, "The three branches of the government of the United States are the legislative, the executive, and the judicial." Suppose my second sentence goes on to say something about the executive branch of the government, and my third sentence to say something about the legislative branch. Do these three sentences together make a unified paragraph? Certainly not; because

they do not include a sentence about the judicial branch of the government. They do not, therefore, fulfill the promise made in the opening sentence, and are no more a paragraph than two feet are a yard. This fault is illustrated in the paragraphing of the following composition:

Of the scenes in *The Merchant of Venice* the ones which excite the most sympathy for Shylock are those where Bassanio asks for the loan, the scene where he bewails that even his daughter has left him, and finally the court scene. In the first of these three Shylock probably makes his most famous plea, and tries to show Bassanio that he like other men must eat to live, and has feelings, a heart and soul. His defence of himself in this instance is strong and shows his good character.

In the second scene Shakespeare makes the reader realize the agony of Shylock, when even his daughter, Jessica, runs away and leaves him alone. The last scene in which Portia, acting as a judge, pronounces to Shylock that he can have a pound of flesh, and not an ounce more nor a drop of blood. Poor Shylock sees right away that he has lost all. He can neither obtain his three thousand ducats nor his pound of flesh. This last scene probably excites more sorrow for him than any other, because here even the learned judge turns against him.

According to its plan, this composition should be all one paragraph, or it should be developed into four paragraphs.

132. The Topic-Sentence. — We are more liable, however, to violate unity in the structure of paragraphs by including too many ideas in one paragraph than by including too few. The surest method of guarding against this danger is to see to it that we never construct a paragraph which cannot be summarized in a single sentence. In planning our theme, in other words, each group of minor points must fall naturally under

some major heading. It should always be kept in mind, however, that this " topic-sentence " need not be actually written out in the paragraph. To illustrate, suppose that we wish to write a paragraph about " Joseph Addison's Sense of Humor." We may not at any point in the paragraph use those five words together; and yet, if we have thought out our work with proper care, the paragraph may make upon the mind of the person who reads it just as strong an impression of unity as if the first sentence in the paragraph had been " Had Addison any sense of humor? " and the last, " Thus it appears that Addison's sense of humor, though very subtle, was very strong." For the beginner the latter method of opening and closing paragraphs — of surrounding them, so to speak, by a *frame* — is perhaps safest. Especially is this the case in the more formal kinds of writing — exposition, criticism, and argument. Here are a number of examples: [1]

When a group of families moved out into the wilderness they built themselves a station or stockade fort; a square palisade of upright logs, loop-holed, with strong blockhouses as bastions at the corners. One side at least was generally formed by the backs of the cabins themselves, all standing in a row; and there

[1] For further illustrations see the paragraph on Polonius, p. 69, and also *College Readings*, p. 16 (J. H. Newman, "The Aim of a University Education"); p. 115 ff. (H. Croly, "Lincoln as More Than an American"); p. 124 ff. (J. Corbin, "English and American Sportsmanship"); p. 130 ff. (G. H. Palmer, "Self-Cultivation in English"); p. 137 ff. (W. James, "The Social Value of the College-Bred"); p. 203 ff. (G. E. Woodberry, "The Waverley Novels"); p. 232 ff. (T. H. Huxley, "Three Hypotheses Respecting the History of Nature"); p. 248 ff. (E. L. Godkin, "Professor Huxley's Lectures"); p. 34 ff. (W. Wilson, "The House of Representatives").

was a great door or gate, that could be strongly barred in case of need. Often no iron whatever was employed in any of the buildings. The square inside contained the provision sheds and frequently a strong central blockhouse as well. These forts, of course, could not stand against cannon, and they were always in danger when attacked with fire; but save for this risk of burning they were very effectual defences against men without artillery, and were rarely taken, whether by whites or Indians, except by surprise. Few other buildings have played so important a part in our history as the rough stockade fort of the backwoods.[1]

Not only is the God of the great Christian churches often a War God, but the Christian life itself is often represented in Christian hymn and preachings as a battle. The Christian fights against Satan and the powers of evil, — he goes forth to war against the evils and wrongs of his day: "The Son of God goes forth to war, a kingly crown to gain" — meanest of motives. The saint wears armor, the armor of the mediæval battle-field, and the archangels and the knights set upon the dragons and fiends, and slay them with swords. A large part of the imagery of Christian literature is drawn from the work of soldiers and armies. "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war" is to-day one of the favorite hymns of the Protestant churches. In the annual procession of the Corpus Christi in Vienna, three bodies take common part, each with great magnificence, — the court, the army, and the church. This is the habitual association which has gradually undermined the capacity of the Church to advance in modern Europe the cause of justice, mercy, and liberty, and hence of peace and goodwill.[2]

Macaulay's use of the topic-sentence at the beginning of paragraphs is especially skillful. Note this series:

[1] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, Vol. I, Ch. v.
[2] Charles W. Eliot, *The Crying Need of a Renewed Christianity*.

It was by the highways that both travellers and goods generally passed from place to place. . . .

One chief cause of the badness of the roads seems to have been the defective state of the law. . . .

On the best highways heavy articles were, in the time of Charles the Second, generally conveyed from place to place by stage wagons. . . .

On byroads, and generally throughout the country north of York and west of Exeter, goods were carried by long trains of pack-horses. . . .

The rich commonly travelled in their own carriages, with at least four horses.[1] . . .

In argument it is not only monotonous but maladroit to announce the topic, or statement to be proved, continually at the beginning. Vary the structure by opening with the details of evidence and leading up to the point which they prove. This device holds the attention. For example:

Similar, too, has been the experience of several smaller cities which have changed to the one-man system. Indianapolis, since the adoption of her centralizing charter in 1891, has not elected a single mayor who has obeyed the spirit, or even the letter, of the laws regulating the civil service. All appointments have been made on strictly partisan grounds. Four years after Quincy, Mass., greatly increased the power of the mayor, Mr. Gamaliel Bradford, who had specially urged the change, was forced to confess that "extravagance of expenditure, local jobbing, and caucus politics are as rampant as in any other city in the state." In Cleveland the mayor has abused his appointing power for the sake of aiding his own political ambitions. Nowhere, in fact, can the advocate of mayor domination, if he be candid, point to anything like thoroughly and con-

[1] T. B. Macaulay, *The History of England*, Ch. iii.

tinuously good administration where that system has prevailed. Temporary improvement has often followed a change to mayor rule; permanent improvement even has resulted in certain cases from doing away with the anomalies and complexities of earlier charters; but the actual success of the centralization of power has fallen very far short of fulfilling the promises which were held out to us.[1]

133. Unity in Description. — On account of the throng of details that may come crowding into your mind when you are writing descriptive paragraphs, you must be particularly careful to produce a unified effect. Here the devices of point of view and dominant tone save the day. Be sure to keep one point of view throughout a paragraph. You cannot take two pictures on the same film. If you try to, the result will be like this:

We were rounding New York on the departing steamer, and we were, by this time, well around to the east. The sun was just below the horizon, and the city was outlined on a field of gold, across which was a sweep of the purest blue I have ever seen. Above the city, the spare forms of the Singer and Metropolitan buildings towered; and, to the left, Brooklyn Bridge stretched out like a mighty arm. There was none of the grimness and newness of the city in broad daylight: the whole mass was fused into one by a beautiful violet light, which toned down the obtrusive brick color of the bridge and buildings to its own hue. As the sun sank, the lights along Broadway and Times Square sprang into life. In the center of the square the glittering electric signs were bewildering. They painted the faces of the hurrying throng sometimes with a bluish tint, sometimes with a yellow glare. The taxis, coming from the side streets suddenly, glittered as they shot into the blaze, so rapidly did

[1] E. Dana Durand, "Council Government *vs.* Mayor Government," in *College Readings*, p. 247.

the reflections sparkle on their windows. A few moments more and we entered Long Island Sound, and the city faded in the distance.

The right-about-face in this paragraph is disastrous to unity. Contrast with this Washington Irving's steady maintenance of his point of view in the following extract:

It was a rainy Sunday in the gloomy month of November. I had been detained, in the course of a journey, by a slight indisposition, from which I was recovering; but was still feverish, and obliged to keep within doors all day, in an inn of the small town of Derby. A wet Sunday in a country inn! — whoever has had the luck to experience one can alone judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements; the bells tolled for church with a melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye; but it seemed as if I had been placed completely out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bedroom looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travellers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water, surrounding an island of muck; there were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable, crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit; his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back; near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapor rising from her reeking hide; a wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves; an unhappy cur, chained to a dog-house hard by, uttered some-

thing every now and then, between a bark and a yelp; a drab of a kitchen wench tramped backwards and forwards through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself; everything in short was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hardened ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor.[1]

The dominant tone may be directly expressed by a topic-sentence,[2] as "It was a rainy Sunday in the gloomy month of November" in Irving's paragraph above. Or it may be suggested by details which together produce the dominant tone:

Under a heaven of exquisitely tender blue, the whole smooth sea has a perfect luminous dove color, the horizon being filled to a great height with greenish-golden haze, — a mist of unspeakably sweet tint, a hue that, imitated in any aquarelle, would be cried out against as an impossibility. As yet the hills are nearly all gray, the forests also inwrapping them are gray and ghostly, for the sun has but just risen above them, and vapors hang like a veil between. Then, over the glassy level of the flood, bands of purple and violet and pale blue and fluid gold begin to shoot and quiver and broaden; these are the currents of the morning, catching varying color with the deepening of the day and the lifting of the tide.[3]

134. Unity in Narration. — In narration the simplest sort of unity is that of a single speech. For this reason a new paragraph begins whenever there is a change of speaker. Units are also formed by changes in time,

[1] Washington Irving, "The Stout Gentleman," in *Bracebridge Hall.*

[2] See also *College Readings,* p. 393 (C. L. Morgan, "The Walrus"); p. 399 (C. Kingsley, "Sir Richard Grenville"); p. 372 (J. Ruskin, "English Cottages"); pp. 358–9 (S. E. White, "A Grove of Sequoias").

[3] Lafcadio Hearn, *Two Years in the French West Indies.* See *College Readings,* p. 340.

action, place, character, mood, and point of view. Indeed, there are innumerable causes which may determine the length and number of paragraphs in a story. Note the way in which the paragraphs in this extract from *A Gala Dress* form distinct steps:

The Babcock sisters guarded nothing more jealously than the privacy of their meals. The neighbors considered that there was a decided reason for this. "The Babcock girls have so little to eat that they're ashamed to let folks see it," people said. It was certain that the old women regarded intrusion at their meals as an insult, but it was doubtful if they would not have done so had their table been set out with all the luxuries of the season instead of scanty bread and butter and no sauce. No sauce for tea was regarded as very poor living by the village women.

To-night the Babcocks had tea very soon after the lace was sewed on the dress. They always had tea early. They were in the midst of it when the front-door opened, and a voice was heard calling out in the hall.

The sisters cast a dismayed and indignant look at each other; they both arose; but the door flew open, and their little square tea-table, with its green-and-white china pot of weak tea, its plate of bread and little glass dish of butter, its two china cups, and thin silver teaspoons, was displayed to view.

"My!" cried the visitor, with a little backward shuffle. "I do hope you'll 'scuse me! I didn't know you was eatin' supper. I wouldn't ha' come in for the world if I'd known. I'll go right out; it wa'n't anything pertickler, anyhow." All the time her sharp and comprehensive gaze was on the tea-table. She counted the slices of bread, she measured the butter, as she talked. The sisters stepped forward with dignity.

"Come into the other room," said Elizabeth; and the visitor, still protesting, with her backward eyes upon the tea-table, gave way before her.

But her eyes lighted at seeing something in the parlor more eagerly than they had upon that frugal and exclusive table. The sisters glanced at each other in dismay. The black silk dress lay over a chair.[1]

Although many acts may rapidly succeed each other in a narrative paragraph, they may be unified by emphasizing their purpose or meaning; they may contribute to a distinct effect, as in Stevenson's account of his being thrown out of a canoe:

I do not know how long it was before I scrambled on to the tree to which I was left clinging, but it was longer than I cared about. My thoughts were of a grave and almost sombre character, but I still clung to my paddle. The stream ran away with my heels as fast as I could pull up my shoulders, and I seemed, by the weight, to have all the water of the Oise in my trouser pockets. You can never know, till you try it, what a dead pull a river makes against a man. Death himself had me by the heels, for this was his last ambuscado, and he must now join personally in the fray. And still I held to my paddle. At last I dragged myself on to my stomach on the trunk, and lay there a breathless sop, with a mingled sense of humour and injustice. A poor figure I must have presented to Burns upon the hill-top with his team. But there was the paddle in my hand. On my tomb, if ever I have one, I mean to get these words inscribed: "He clung to his paddle." [2]

Here the ingenious reiteration of " I clung to my paddle " binds all the facts together. Another device for composing incidents to produce unity is climax.

The girl rose to her feet and turned toward the newcomers. She moved all of a piece; and shame and exhaustion were

[1] Mary Wilkins Freeman, *A Gala Dress.* See *College Readings,* pages 526–7. [2] R. L. Stevenson, *An Inland Voyage.*

expressed in every line of her fresh young body; and she held her head down and kept her eyes upon the pavement, as she came slowly forward. In the course of her advance, her eyes fell upon Denis de Beaulieu's feet — feet of which he was justly vain, be it remarked, and wore in the most elegant accoutrement even while travelling. She paused — started, as if his yellow boots had conveyed some shocking meaning — and glanced suddenly up into the wearer's countenance. Their eyes met; shame gave place to horror and terror in her looks; the blood left her lips; with a piercing scream she covered her face with her hands and sank upon the chapel floor. [1]

Transitional paragraphs are often needed to suggest the passing of time; they may be long or short, but short ones with sweep of phrase are most effective.

And dusk gathered over Paris, and the lights sprang out, and the tense hours crept away.[2]

COHERENCE

135. Coherence in Exposition and Argument. — There should be steady progression in a paragraph from beginning to end. We should always feel that we are "getting on." The internal arrangement of a paragraph cannot be managed by any set rules, because paragraphs are not machine-made entities. Many ways there are of making the parts, that is, the sentences, of a paragraph cohere, but these ways depend on the nature of our thought and purposes. Observation of the work of the best writers

[1] R. L. Stevenson, "The Sire de Malétroit's Door," *College Readings*, p. 511.

[2] Leonard Merrick, "The Assault in the Rue des Cendres," in *The Man Who Understood Women.*

shows that the many methods of gaining coherence may be grouped under the three heads of order, parallel constructions, and connectives.

136. Order. — You should choose whatever order of development best brings out your idea. If it is a process you are explaining, the order will naturally be chronological, as in this instance:

In a wooded country you will not take the time to fool with tent poles. A stout line run through the eyelets and along the apex will string it successfully between your two trees. Draw the line as tight as possible, but do not be too unhappy, if, after your best efforts, it still sags a little. That is what your long crotched stick is for. Stake out your four corners. If you get them in a good rectangle and in such relation to the apex as to form two isosceles triangles of the ends, your tent will stand smoothly. Therefore, be an artist and do it right. Once the four corners are well placed, the rest follows naturally. Occasionally in the North Country it will be found that the soil is too thin, over the rocks, to grip the tent-pegs. In that case drive them at a sharp angle as deep as they will go, and then lay a large flat stone across the slant of them. Thus anchored, you will ride out a gale. Finally, wedge your long sapling crotch under the line — outside the tent, of course — to tighten it. Your shelter is up. If you are a woodsman, ten or fifteen minutes has sufficed to accomplish all this.[1]

If the subject of the paragraph falls easily into divisions, you announce the divisions and take them up in order:

Such is the general distribution of the reef-building corals, but there are some very interesting and singular circumstances to be observed in the conformation of the reefs, when we con-

[1] Stewart Edward White, "On Making Camp," in *The Forest. College Readings*, p. 22. See also *College Readings*, 87–88.

sider them individually. The reefs, in fact, are of three different kinds; some of them stretch out from the shore, almost like a prolongation of the beach, covered only by shallow water, and in the case of an island, surrounding it like a fringe of no considerable breadth. These are termed "fringing reefs." Others are separated by a channel which may attain a width of many miles, and a depth of twenty or thirty fathoms or more, from the nearest land; and when this land is an island, the reef surrounds it like a low wall, and the sea between the reef and the land is, as it were, a moat inside this wall. Such reefs as these are called "encircling" when they surround an island; and "barrier" reefs when they stretch parallel with the coast of a continent. In both these cases there is ordinary dry land inside the reef, and separated from it only by a narrower or a wider, a shallower or a deeper, space of sea, which is called a "lagoon," or "inner passage." But there is a third kind of reef, of very common occurrence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, which goes by the name of an "Atoll." This is, to all intents and purposes, an encircling reef, without anything to encircle; or, in other words, without an island in the middle of its lagoon. The atoll has exactly the appearance of a vast, irregularly oval, or circular, breakwater, enclosing smooth water in its midst. The depth of the water in the lagoon rarely exceeds twenty or thirty fathoms, but, outside the reef, it deepens with great rapidity to 200 or 300 fathoms. The depth immediately outside the barrier, or encircling, reefs, may also be very considerable; but, at the outer edge of a fringing reef, it does not amount usually to more than twenty or twenty-five fathoms; in other words, from 120 to 150 feet.[1]

If your purpose is to give instances and examples in support of a general statement, use a topic-sentence either

[1] T. H. Huxley, "On Coral and Coral Reefs," in *Critiques and Addresses*. For other examples see *College Readings*, 1, 85–87, and 221.

at the beginning or the end and arrange the instances in the order of time or climax:

This tendency has modified the attitude of orthodox churches toward Unitarians in a large degree. It has promoted a spirit of tolerance and friendly co-operation. It was not always so. Jefferson, though a sincere student of the teachings of Jesus and a Unitarian, was denounced as an atheist. We know the contumely, insult, and mob violence to which Priestley was subjected in England. Franklin, the Adamses, and Fillmore were really Unitarians, but they were looked at askance. Lincoln, one of the most deeply religious men, was clearly Unitarian in his faith. In spite of all these illustrious examples, religious prejudices have been played upon in politics to defeat Unitarians and upholders of liberal Christianity and in very recent years; but even in the time my life compasses, I can see a great change for the better.[1]

In argument the foregoing method is the usual one: the proposition is the topic-sentence and the proof furnishes the details. In this respect, exposition and argument are identical; or rather, exposition *is* argument. For when we adduce instances to support a statement, as in the paragraph above, we are trying to convince our readers that the statement is true. Paragraphs composed of proposition and proof are usually built on a very careful plan, as may be seen by comparing part of a paragraph by Macaulay with an outline of it:

Still more important is the benefit which all orders of society, and especially the lower orders, have derived from the mollifying influence of civilization on the national character. The groundwork of that character has indeed been the same through many generations, in the sense in which the groundwork of the

[1] W. H. Taft, *The Religious Convictions of an American Citizen.*

character of an individual may be said to be the same when he is a rude and thoughtless schoolboy and when he is a refined and accomplished man. It is pleasing to reflect that the public mind of England has softened while it has ripened, and that we have, in the course of ages, become not only a wiser, but also a kinder people. There is scarcely a page of the history or lighter literature of the seventeenth century which does not contain some proof that our ancestors were less humane than their posterity. The discipline of workshops, of schools, of private families, though not more efficient than at present, was infinitely harsher. Masters, well born and bred, were in the habit of beating their servants. Pedagogues knew no way of imparting knowledge but by beating their pupils. Husbands, of decent station, were not ashamed to beat their wives. The implacability of hostile factions was such as we can scarcely conceive. Whigs were disposed to murmur because Stafford was suffered to die without seeing his bowels burned before his face. Tories reviled and insulted Russell as his coach passed from the Tower to the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields.[1]

Proposition: Still more important is the benefit which all orders of society, especially the lower orders, have derived from the mollifying influence of civilization on the national character.

I. There is scarcely a page of the history or lighter literature of the seventeenth century which does not contain some proof that our ancestors were less humane than their posterity.

A. The discipline of workshops, of schools, of private families, though not more efficient than at present, was infinitely harsher.

1. Masters, well born and bred, were in the habit of beating their servants.

[1] T. B. Macaulay, *The History of England*, Ch. iii.

2. Pedagogues knew no way of imparting knowledge but by beating their pupils.
3. Husbands, of decent station, were not ashamed to beat their wives.

B. The implacability of hostile factions was such as we can scarcely conceive.

1. Whigs were disposed to murmur because Stafford was suffered to die without seeing his bowels burned before his face.
2. Tories reviled and insulted Russell as his coach passed from the Tower to the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The continual use of the proposition-proof method in argument becomes monotonous, as has been pointed out before. Variety may be gained by putting the proof first and the proposition last. An example of this is given on page 214.

If, again, your purpose is to set off one phase of your subject against another, you may employ contrast:

Most people in this world seem to live "in character"; they have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and the three are congruous one with another and true to the rules of their type. You can speak of them as being of this sort of people or that. They are, as theatrical people say, no more (and no less) than "character actors." They have a class, they have a place, they know what is becoming in them and what is due to them, and their proper size of tombstone tells at last how properly they have played the part. But there is also another kind of life that is not so much living as a miscellaneous tasting of life. One gets hit by some unusual transverse force, one is jerked out of one's stratum and lives crosswise for the rest of the time, and, as it were, in a succession of samples. That has been my lot, and that is what has set me at last writing something

in the nature of a novel. I have got an unusual series of impressions that I want very urgently to tell.[1]

137. Parallel Constructions. — You may hold together the thought of a paragraph by making the sentences all march in the same direction. The repetition of sentence-forms will accomplish this purpose. A series of sentences may begin in the same way, or may be parallel to each other in construction:

Two men I honor, and no third. First, the toil-worn Craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the Scepter of this Planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a Man living manlike. O, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated Brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee too lay a god-created Form, but it was not to be unfolded; incrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of Labour: and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on: *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.[2]

138. Connectives. — Often the relation of ideas within a paragraph needs to be made clear by the use of connective

[1] H. G. Wells, *Tono-Bungay*, Bk. I, Ch. i. There are other instances in *College Readings*, 10, 11, 13, and 125–126.

[2] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, Bk. III, Ch. iv. And see also *College Readings*, 16–17, 187-188, 290–291.

words and phrases, such as conjunctions, pronouns, etc. Note the connectives in the paragraph on coral reefs (p. 222): "in fact," "these," "others," "such reefs as these," "in both these cases," "but there is a third kind," "this is." The repetition of a word, or echo, is another effective way of linking sentences together:

. . . The stumps were left to dot the fields of grain and Indian *corn*. *The corn* in especial was the stand-by and invariable resource of the western settler. . . .[1]

. . . Perhaps the most profoundly *thrilling* of all Scott's situations is that in which the family of Colonel Mannering are waiting for the carriage which may or may not arrive by night to bring an unknown man into a princely possession. Yet almost the whole of that *thrilling scene* consists of a ridiculous conversation about food, and flirtation between a frivolous old lawyer and a fashionable girl. We can say nothing about what makes these *scenes*, except that the wind bloweth where it listeth, and that here the wind blows strong.[2]

In the following admirable paragraph of Macaulay's, the ideas are echoed by synonyms. The coherence of this paragraph is so fine at all points that you should memorize it.

Such were Addison's *talents* for conversation. But his *rare gifts* were not exhibited to *crowds* or to *strangers*. As soon as he entered a *large company*, as soon as he saw an *unknown face*, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in *great assemblies* would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and laughing *round a table* from the time when the play ended till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet even at such *a table* he was not seen to the

[1] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, Vol. I, Ch. v.
[2] Gilbert K. Chesterton, "Sir Walter Scott," in *Varied Types*.

best advantage. To enjoy his conversation in the *highest perfection*, it was necessary to *be alone with him*, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say, "as real conversation, but *between two persons.*" [1]

139. Transitions between Paragraphs. — Thus far we have been dealing with the single paragraph. When paragraphs are in a series, as is usually the case, their relation to each other must be shown clearly. They must be linked together coherently. A good transition is like the statue of the god Janus: it looks before and after. It refers in some swift way to what has preceded and announces what is to follow, thus:

When we turn from the aspects of Nature to the cities of men, the uniformity is even more remarkable.[2]

From this illustration it would appear that taxes are private property taken for public purposes.[3]

The forward-looking statement in the transition is, as you will perceive, the topic-sentence. Other instances appear in the paragraphs on pages 212–214 of this book. You have an opportunity to practice great ingenuity in framing transitions. You may use a brief summarizing phrase, an echo, a demonstrative pronoun, or an appropriate connective. In certain cases it may be enough to number your paragraphs by saying "secondly," "thirdly," etc.; but this is so mechanical a method that you should avoid it. Flexibility and variety should be your aim. How

[1] T. B. Macaulay, *Essay on Addison.* For further illustrations see *College Readings*, 1, 43 ff., 99 ff.

[2] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth.*

[3] John Fiske, *Civil Government in the United States.* For other instances see *College Readings*, 40–41, 44–45, 55–57, 99 ff.

great the range may be you will see from these transitions of Stevenson:

Another portrait which irresistibly attracted the eye was . . .

At the same time and step by step with this increase . . .

One thing, at least, comes very clearly out of these considerations . . .

Now to be properly enjoyed a walking tour must . . .

140. Coherence in Description.[1] — In descriptive paragraphs you should be on guard against confusing the reader by throwing in details of sight or sound or what not in a helter-skelter manner. When you have determined on the point of view or the dominant tone, you should introduce details in the most natural way under the circumstances. Usually the most natural order is the order in which the eye takes in the various objects — the most striking first and then the less striking. Observe the order in Irving's view of the stable yard from his window: first the general effect of wetness — "littered with wet straw," "a stagnant pool of water"; then he begins to take in particulars — "the half-drowned fowls." His attention is centered for a moment on the cock, and he now describes him minutely. If you are surveying a landscape, you may proceed from near to far or from far to near. Adopt whatever method will make it easy for the reader to receive the various sense-impressions which you want him to receive.[2]

141. Coherence in Narration. — Paragraphs, as we have seen, play so many parts in the development of a story — being sometimes exposition, sometimes description, and frequently nothing but speeches — that it is

[1] Cf. § 83. [2] See *College Readings*, 342, 366.

impossible to classify the various methods of internal arrangement. The time order is the natural order in a purely narrative paragraph. Act follows act, as in the paragraph on pages 219–220. Your feeling for the sequence of events will make you coherent.

EMPHASIS

142. Emphasis in Exposition and Argument. — There are two chief ways of making a paragraph emphatic in structure. You should *place the important ideas in important positions* — the beginning and the end; and you should give to each subordinate idea an amount of space proportionate to its value. The principle of emphasis is closely bound up with the principle of unity. Usually, what you do to secure unity will also secure emphasis. The topic-sentence serves both purposes. Again, the summarizing sentence at the end, which helps to frame the paragraph, also enforces its main idea. Since the end is the more effective position, this summarizing sentence ought to be phrased very forcibly. It should snap the whip. Note the rousing finale of this paragraph by Bernard Shaw:

Again, they tell me that So-and-So, who does not write prefaces, is no charlatan. Well, I am. I first caught the ear of the British public on a cart in Hyde Park, to the blaring of brass bands, and this not at all as a reluctant sacrifice of my instinct of privacy to political necessity, but because, like all dramatists and mimes of genuine vocation, I am a natural-born mountebank. I am well aware that the ordinary British citizen requires a profession of shame from all mountebanks by way of homage to the sanctity of the ignoble private life to which

he is condemned by his incapacity for public life. Thus Shakespeare, after proclaiming that Not marble nor the gilded monuments of Princes should outlive his powerful rhyme, would apologise, in the approved taste, for making himself a motley to the view; and the British citizen has ever since quoted the apology and ignored the fanfare. When an actress writes her memoirs, she impresses on you in every chapter how cruelly it tried her feelings to exhibit her person to the public gaze; but she does not forget to decorate the book with a dozen portraits of herself. I really cannot respond to this demand for mock-modesty. I am ashamed neither of my work nor of the way it is done. I like explaining its merits to the huge majority who don't know good work from bad. It does them good; and it does me good, curing me of nervousness, laziness, and snobbishness. I write prefaces as Dryden did, and treatises as Wagner, because I *can;* and I would give half a dozen of Shakespeare's plays for one of the prefaces he ought to have written. I leave the delicacies of retirement to those who are gentlemen first and literary workmen afterwards. The cart and trumpet for me.[1]

Here are several pungent endings of paragraphs:

England cannot do without its Irish and its Scots to-day, because it cannot do without at least a little sanity.[2]

Briefly, the philosophy of *John Bull's Other Island* is quite effective and satisfactory except for this incurable fault: the fact that John Bull's other island is not John Bull's.[3]

There were gentlemen and there were seamen in the navy of Charles the Second. But the seamen were not gentlemen, and the gentlemen were not seamen.[4]

[1] George Bernard Shaw, *Three Plays for Puritans,* Preface.
[2] George Bernard Shaw, *John Bull's Other Island,* Preface.
[3] Gilbert K. Chesterton, *George Bernard Shaw.*
[4] T. B. Macaulay, *The History of England,* Ch. iii.

Read also the endings of the paragraphs by Colonel Roosevelt (p. 213), Lincoln (p. 106), and Macaulay (p. 228).[1] In argument the swift driving home of a point by means of an apt illustration, an epigram, an antithesis, a surprise, has both convincing and persuasive power.

The second means of gaining emphasis in structure is *proportion*. If there are five subordinate ideas in a paragraph and the third of these is most important, it should be given the greatest space. A good illustration is a paragraph in Lord Bryce's *American Commonwealth*, in which he mentions several cities as exceptions to the general fact that American cities are monotonous. He names ten in all, but gives one half, and that the latter half, of the paragraph to one of them, New Orleans, because it is the most striking exception.

This example illustrates also a third method of securing emphasis — climax. Whenever possible, ideas should be presented on an ascending scale of interest. Coherence has the right of way, however, in the matter of arrangement. You must be clear; you may be emphatic if you can.

143. Emphasis in Description. — Dominant tone, again, is perhaps the best means of securing emphasis in a descriptive paragraph. Whether you merely suggest the mood at the beginning by significant details, or whether you announce it vigorously, depends on your purpose and material. However you may have begun, you should leave a distinct impression on the reader at the end. Emphatic both in beginning and ending is Irving's paragraph about the stable yard on a rainy day. "It was a rainy Sunday," it opens. It draws to a close with a swift summary, "Everything was comfortless and forlorn," then

[1] Other examples: *College Readings*, 140 and 142.

adds one exception, the " crew of hardened ducks," which humorously emphasizes the wetness of the scene and leaves the impression of saturation, — " assembled like boon companions round a puddle and making a riotous noise over their liquor." Look up the endings of the paragraphs in the models of description in *College Readings*.

144. Emphasis in Narration. — In narrative paragraphs as distinguished from dialogue, you are free to use any methods you please in order to be emphatic. The beginning of a paragraph should show — often by merely a word or hint — what is the change in time, action, place, character, which causes it to be a new paragraph. Observe how this is done in the extract from *A Gala Dress* (p. 218). The end is simply the natural conclusion of the act or series of acts which have been narrated. Try to make the end a climax if you can, or, in other words, make it a strong accent.[1]

EXERCISES

1. Write several topic-sentences from which expository paragraphs could be developed.

2. Write several topic-sentences from which argumentative paragraphs could be developed.

3. Write several topic-sentences from which descriptive paragraphs could be developed.

4. Write several topic-sentences from which narrative paragraphs could be developed.

5. Write paragraphs on the topic-sentences in Exercises 1–4, developing the ideas by any of these means:

chronological order	contrast
division	parallel constructions
instances and examples	connectives

[1] See examples on pages 219–220.

6. Underline all connective words and expressions in this passage:

The larger veins are nearly all provided with valves which open to allow the blood to pass on toward the heart, but close against the blood if it endeavors to return back toward the capillaries. Now, the larger veins are imbedded in muscles, so that the effect of muscular contractions is to compress numberless veins now in one part and now in another part of their length; and, as each vein is thus compressed, its contained fluid is, of course, driven forward from valve to valve. Hence, as all the veins of the body end in the heart, the total effect of muscular activity is greatly to increase the flow of venous blood in the heart. The heart is thus stimulated to greater activity in order to avoid being gorged with the unusual inflow of blood. So great is the increase of the heart's activity that is required to meet this sudden demand on its powers of propulsion, that every one can feel in his own person how greatly muscular exercise increases the number of the heart's contractions. Now, the result of this increase of the heart's activity is, of course, to pump a correspondingly greater amount of blood into the arteries, and so to quicken the circulation all over the body. This, in turn, gives rise to a greater amount of tissue-change — oxygenation, nutrition, and drainage — which, together with the increased discharge of carbonic acid by the muscles during their time of increased activity, has the effect of unduly charging the blood with carbonic acid and other effete materials.

7. Supply connectives in the following paragraphs in the places indicated by carets:

a. To transport fifty men, ∧, without a trial, is bad enough. ∧ let us consider, in the first place, that some of these men were taken in arms against the government and that it is not clear that they were not all so taken. ∧, Cromwell or his officers might, according to the usages of those unhappy

times, have put them to the sword, or turned them over to the provost-marshal at once. ∧, ∧, is not a complete vindication; for execution by martial law ought never to take place but under circumstances which admit of no delay; and if there is time to transport men, there is time to try them.

b. We live in an age in which no achievement is to be cheaply had. All the cheap achievements, open to amateurs, are exhausted and have become commonplace. Adventure, ∧, is no longer extraordinary: which is another way of saying it is commonplace. Any amateur may seek and find adventure; but it has been sought and had in all its kinds. Restless men, idle men, chivalrous men, men drawn on by mere curiosity and men drawn on by love of the knowledge that lies outside books and laboratories, have crossed the whole face of the habitable globe in search of it, ferreting it out in corners even, following its bypaths and beating its coverts, and it is nowhere any longer a novelty or distinction to have discovered and enjoyed it. The whole round of pleasure, ∧, has been exhausted time out of mind, and most of it discredited as not pleasure after all, but just an expensive counterfeit; so that many rich people have been driven to devote themselves to expense regardless of pleasure. No new pleasure, ∧, has been invented within the memory of man. For every genuine thrill and satisfaction, ∧, we are apparently, in this sophisticated world, shut in to work, to modifying and quickening the life of the age. If college be one of the highways to life and achievement, it must be one of the highways to work.

8. Rewrite the following paragraphs so that they shall be coherent and emphatic:

a. General Wheeler was popular. Everybody liked him. He was the idol of the Confederate troops. He was popular in the Cuban campaign. He was a small man, never weighing more than 120 pounds.

b. When in his seat in the Senate, listening to proceedings, his feet were usually employed in holding down the desk, and his hands, whittling a pine stick, a supply of which he engaged the sergeant-at-arms to furnish him. He was a regular attendant at church, and during service he "improved the occasion" in whittling out little articles to give children, among whom he had many friends. Some of these pine souvenirs of Sam Houston are to this day treasured by men and women to whom he gave them as children.

c. We have new evidence of the treacherous character of the Sioux Indians in the tragedy at Wounded Knee Creek. It has been the Government policy to treat the Indian as a spoiled child rather than as the dangerous brute that he is. He must be very wily about shedding blood, but is nothing but a "squaw" until he has a scalp at his belt. The events of the present Indian outbreak have made it clear that the policy of gentleness is disastrous both to the country and to the Indian. The Sioux lad is taught that duplicity, lying, treachery, theft, and bloodshed are the manly attributes. When he gets worked up to the proper pitch of frenzy he wants to kill somebody if he is not killed himself. When their surroundings are considered their treachery is not a subject for wonder.

d. The statement is made from time to time that we are admitting great masses of socialists. But train bright young men among these immigrants to know what their duties are, teach them their rights, put at their disposal arguments with which to meet the specious assertions of self-styled and talkative leaders, and the much-vaunted dangers of socialism will disappear. Nobody has furnished their hearers with arguments or taken steps to teach them that in America, where conditions are fairly equal, no necessity exists for the violent agitation of these questions. The number is exaggerated, and more importance is attached to the utterances of these than they deserve. But they are permitted to go among their fellows to inoculate them with whatever doctrines they choose, and there is nothing

to oppose them. It must be admitted, however, that some of them know just enough to be dangerous.

e. In many ways a large correspondence is a great benefit to a person, but it may also be considered a great burden. It is always a pleasure to receive letters from friends, but to most people it is not such an easy task to answer them. In getting letters we often receive information which we should not otherwise obtain. In writing to some people it is very hard to make the letter interesting as very little is held in common between the people. Yet the letter may be interesting, as neither of them know what to expect. Writing letters of this sort is perhaps the best practice as so much thought has to be given to the composition. On the other hand a large correspondence requires a great deal of time, which in many cases might be spent more profitably. Oftentimes letters are written hurriedly no thought being given to the punctuation or spelling and the substance of the letter is very little considered. Letter-writing, then, may be made profitable and it is very good training when care is taken in the writing and thought given to the composition.

CHAPTER VII

SENTENCES

UNITY

To have unity a sentence must express one central idea. This central idea may indeed be accompanied by ideas of subordinate importance which modify it in various ways, but all parts should be fused together to produce the effect of one thing. A sentence should be a unit both in thought and in expression, or form.

145. Unity of Thought. — Unity of thought requires that two or more unrelated ideas should not be grouped together in one sentence. If they are thus grouped, the result is almost always ludicrous, for example:

Steele was often at Button's Coffee House with Addison and they both wore flowing wigs.

Every one laughs at such a sentence. It hardly needs to be said that the two thoughts here should be divided at once into separate sentences:

Steele was often at Button's Coffee House with Addison. We are to picture them wearing the flowing wigs of the day.

Lack of unity in substance is characteristic of the sentences of uneducated people. With them speech flows on endlessly.

"It's this as has brought me, good gentlemen; a gold wedding ring in the Brixton Road. It belongs to my girl Sally, as was màrried only this time twelvemonth, which her husband is steward aboard a Union boat, and what he'd say if he come 'ome and found her without her ring is more than I can think, he being short enough at the best o' times; but more especially when he has the drink." [1]

In exposition and argument, where clearness is of prime importance, rambling sentences will cloud your meaning. Say one thing at a time, as crisply and compactly as you can. If your material is complicated, break it up into neat, clear units. Indeed, exposition is just that process of making each step clear, one at a time.

One offence against unity of substance is common enough to deserve special notice. A sentence which makes a general statement to be followed by a series of instances often includes one or more of these instances:

There are several reasons why Shakespeare's characters are more like real persons than Milton's: in the first place the characters in Comus are meant to resemble traits. In the second place, etc.

Unity demands that either all or none of the reasons should appear in the same sentence with the general statement. It is better to let the statement stand by itself. This matter has special bearing on the writing of argument.

146. Unity of Expression. — You should look at the substance of a sentence from one point of view, and phrase it so that the parts all move in the same direction. You should avoid any shift in construction, such as change of subject, or change of voice in the verb.

[1] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*, Ch. v.

I rushed to the window and the soldiers were seen marching down the street.

In this case the writer, perhaps because he dislikes to keep on using the first person, perhaps because he is just heedless, shifts his subject to the "soldiers." That change causes a shift from the active to the passive voice, "were seen." Furthermore, the result is ambiguous: the soldiers might have been seen by some one on the street corner for all we know. This ambiguity can be cleared up by adding "by me" — most clumsy of constructions. The simplest and best form would have been:

I rushed to the window and saw the soldiers marching down the street.

But inexperienced writers seem to be hypnotized by the very perversity of the shift in construction. In theme after theme this sentence grins at us:

I ran across the Yard and a subway car was taken by me.

The rule to follow is: Carry on the construction with which you begin. Compound sentences are often written because, though no new verbal idea is introduced, a synonymous verb leads the writer astray. For instance:

(1) An interest in education and school methods (2) *springs up*, and (3) a community pride in children as well as in cattle and hogs (4) *is aroused*.

Here (4) *is aroused* expresses almost the same idea as (2) *springs up*. The sentence, therefore, would better have consisted of two subjects, (1) and (3), with one verb — either (2) or (4).

147. Unity in Description. — In description unity of thought is just as important as in exposition. The fact

that you are giving many details of landscape or many sense impressions should not prevent you from composing these details or impressions so that in each sentence you achieve unity of effect. For instance:

There were still, hot hollows surrounded by wet rocks where he could hardly breathe for the heavy scents of the night flowers and the bloom along the creeper buds; dark avenues where the moonlight lay in belts as regular as checkered marbles in a church aisle; thickets where the wet young growth stood breast-high about him and threw its arms round his waist; and hilltops crowned with broken rock, where he leaped from stone to stone above the lairs of the frightened little foxes.[1]

The tropical night is the central idea here, just as security from cold is the unifying idea in the next case:

Now play-goers get cold feet, and invalids stop up every crevice in their rooms, and make themselves worse; and the streets are comparatively silent; and the wind rises and falls in moanings; and the fire burns blue and crackles; and an easy-chair with your feet by it on a stool, the lamp or candles a little behind you, and an interesting book just opened where you left off, is a bit of heaven upon earth.[2]

As a rule, however, descriptive sentences are shorter than these:

The adobe walls and sparse brick sidewalks of the drowsing town radiated the heat in an oily, quivering shimmer.[3]

148. Unity in Narration. — In narration, there is endless variety in effect. Sentences should be short, if the story is to move rapidly, and each should have its

[1] Rudyard Kipling, "The Spring Running," in *The Jungle Book.*

[2] Leigh Hunt, "A 'Now' Descriptive of a Cold Day," in *Essays.*

[3] Frank Norris, *The Octopus,* Ch. vi.

own unity. Often several related acts may be grouped together, thus:

Unfortunately, as he turned to beat a retreat, his foot rolled upon a pebble; he fell against the wall with an ejaculation, and his sword rang loudly on the stones.[1]

COHERENCE

You may make your sentences coherent — that is, you may make the internal arrangement clear — by paying attention to the order of words, the grammatical form, and the use of connectives.

149. Order. — The first law of coherence, as of housekeeping, is "Keep together things that belong together." Failure to follow this law produces sentences like this:

Comus is about to force some julep which he has in a glass on their sister.

When the words are rearranged in their proper places, we have:

Comus is about to force on their sister some julep which he has in a glass.

A troublesome fault in order is the misplacing of "only." To realize the changes in meaning which the position of this word causes, try it in all the blanks of this sentence:

I borrowed my brother's watch.

Note the differences in meaning here:

Wrong: At an early age we are told that Poe . . .
Better: At an early age, we are told, Poe . . .
or
Better: We are told that at an early age Poe . . .

[1] R. L. Stevenson, *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*.

150. Grammatical Form. — The most serious errors in grammatical form may be classified under the headings of dangling modifiers, reference, and parallel construction.

151. Dangling Modifiers. — The dangling participle is perhaps responsible for more amusing blunders than almost any other misconstruction:

Having eaten our lunch, the steamboat departed.

The fault is that the participle does not modify the subject of the main clause, but agrees with a subject unexpressed, "we." There are two ways of correcting this sentence. We may make "we" the subject of the main clause, so that the sentence will read:

Having eaten our lunch, we departed on the steamer.

or we may make "we" the subject of an introductory clause:

After we had eaten our lunch, the steamboat departed.

The "squinting" phrase or clause (*i.e.* the phrase or clause that may be looking one way or the other — you can hardly tell which) is liable to occur at the point where a subordinate clause joins the main part of the sentence.

After I had told him that he must hurry *in spite of his other engagements* he finished his work in a week.

Although he at first improved *gradually* he became more careless.

It is usually best, when the subject of the clause has a modifier, to put the simple (unmodified) subject as the first word in the main clause and to put the modifier later in the clause.

When a subordinate clause precedes the main clause, it is advisable to begin the main clause with its subject: if the main clause is allowed to begin with an adverb or a phrase indicating time, place, etc., there is great danger that this adverb or phrase may seem to point back to the subordinate clause instead of forward to the main clause.

Incoherent: When we had arranged to have Joe look after the camp *in company with the other guide* we started up the river.

The italicized words are dangerously near the subordinate clause; they had better be at the end of the main clause.

152. Reference. — The noun to which a pronoun refers must be clearly expressed.

His lands were broad and fruitful but rather than share it with the common folk of the village it was left in the fields to rot.

The buried antecedent of " it " is " fruit " in the adjective " fruitful." An adjective should not be referred to as if it were a noun.

Comus is long, artificial, and didactic, all of which are serious faults in a poem.

153. Parallel Constructions. — Ideas that are parallel in value should be expressed in parallel constructions. Note these " unequal yokefellows in defective double harness ": [1]

Scott's poems appeal to me because they are quite probable, good rhythm, and sound plot.

Here the qualities of Scott's poems, which are parallel in value, are expressed partly in nouns, partly in adjectives.

[1] *The King's English*, Oxford, 1906, pp. 311 ff.

The reason for this error is that the writer forgot how he had begun the sentence and then ran off the track. We may express the idea in parallel adjectives, thus:

Scott's poems appeal to me because they are { probable / rhythmical / sound in plot }

or in parallel nouns, thus:

Scott's poems appeal to me because they have { probability / rhythm / plot }

Parallelism may exist in a series of words, or phrases, or clauses.

A. Single words.
1. Adjectives: It was a (1) convenient, (2) spacious, and (3) inexpensive house.
2. Nouns: The (1) convenience, (2) spaciousness, and (3) inexpensiveness of the house united to commend it.

B. Phrases.
1. Prepositions: (1) Of the convenience of the house, (2) of its spaciousness, and (3) of its inexpensiveness, there could be no doubt.
2. Infinitives: (1) To be convenient, (2) to be spacious, and (3) to be inexpensive, a house must be very carefully planned.

C. Clauses.
1. Substantive: (1) That it was convenient, (2) that it was spacious, and (3) that it was inexpensive admitted of no doubts.
2. Concessive: (1) Although it was convenient, (2) although it was spacious, and (3) although it was inexpensive, we did not buy the house.

Take the following sentence, for example:

(1) Although he was poor and (2) in spite of his bashfulness, he was very popular.

This is an imperfect set, because it consists of a *concessive clause* (1), and a *prepositional phrase* (2), a confusion of Class *B* 1 and Class *C* 2. It may be made coherent in two ways:

(1) by reducing both parts to the pattern of *B* 1,

In spite of his poverty and [in spite of] his bashfulness, he was extremely popular.

(2) by reducing both parts to the pattern of *C* 2,

Although he was poor and [although he was] bashful, he was extremely popular.

To see just what are the means and the effects of parallel phrases and clauses in the sentence, we may turn back to any of the great prose writers of the eighteenth century — the golden age of parallel construction. Take Pope, for example, who begins the preface of his works with this paragraph:

I am inclined to think that both the writers of books and the readers of them are generally not a little unreasonable in their expectations. The first seem to fancy that the world must approve whatever they produce, and the latter to imagine that authors are obliged to please them at any rate. Methinks, as, on the one hand, no single man is born with a right of controlling the opinions of all the rest; so, on the other, the world has no title to demand that the whole care and time of any particular person should be sacrificed to its entertainment. Therefore, I cannot but believe that writers and readers are under equal obligations for as much fame or pleasure as each affords the other.

How thoroughly coherent in form this is we vaguely realize as we read it. It is particularly easy to understand and to read aloud. The secret of this smoothness is that the parallelism in thought is carried out into admirably parallel constructions. Suppose we rewrite a part of the paragraph so as to bring out this point a little more clearly.

I am inclined to think that
both (1) the writers of books
and (2) the readers of them
are generally not a little unreasonable in their expectations.
(3) The first seem to fancy that the world must approve whatever they produce and
(4) the latter (*seem*, understood) to imagine that authors are obliged to please them at any rate.

Of these constructions, (1) and (2) are strictly parallel in form as in matter. In fact, they contain the same words, so far as that is possible, with the single exception that in (2) we find instead of the noun " books " a pronoun referring to " books." Constructions (3) and (4) are similar, of course, in idea. They are an amplification of the point briefly made in (1) and (2). Construction (3) takes up the unreasonableness of authors in their attitude toward the public; construction (4) the unreasonableness of the public toward authors. Now see how the parallelism of form in (3) and (4) is achieved. " The first " in (3) corresponds exactly to " the latter " in (4); " seem " in (3) is to be supplied in (4); " to fancy " in (3) is the mate of " to imagine " in (4); the substantive clause beginning with " that the world " in (3) is precisely similar

to the substantive clause beginning " that authors are obliged " in (4).

As we study this passage we perceive that

1. The conjunction " and," which does so much harm when it is misused, may, when correctly used, be a great aid to parallelism; *e.g.*, the " and " between construction (1) and construction (2).

2. Grammatical resemblance is of capital importance. For instance, take again constructions (1) and (2). As far as expressing the *idea* is concerned, there is, in either construction, practically nothing to choose between " writers," " writers of books," and " those who write books." But suppose that we rewrite Pope in this way: " Both writers and those who read books," or " Both readers and those who write books," and we have clearly injured the parallelism of form by neglecting the very important principle that parallel sets of ideas should be expressed in constructions which are grammatically alike.

3. Such introductory phrases as " the first," " the second," are, especially for long clauses, sentences, or paragraphs, indispensable aids to parallelism. But the assistance of these aids should not be invoked too often, for they are *external aids*, and as such are less admirable than those connecting phrases which are more deeply inwrought into the sentence. In other words, such connectives as " the first," " the second," are merely the 1's and 2's of the plan, written out. Everybody knows the proverbial fondness of the old-time clergyman for his " firstly," " secondly," " thirdly." That we smile at the clergyman for using these, and nothing else, to tie his discourse together, is because we feel the uselessness of attempting to join together by merely external connectives

material which in thought is not particularly well connected.

You have probably observed the frequency with which careful writers of prose, especially when they are attempting parallel constructions which are at all elaborate, make use of the "magic number three." Three adjectives, three phrases, three clauses — over and over again you will find that the best prose is built up in this way. And after all, three is an excellent number for this purpose. It is just enough, and not too much. It neither wearies you nor lets you down too soon. It gives you a beginning, a middle, and an end. Ask yourself if your own prose cannot make use, now and then, of this magic number.

154. Connectives. — The proper relation of ideas to each other should be shown by the use of connectives. It is only in immature minds that all ideas pass along on a dead level like this:

The play was over and I started to take a car for home but found that I had no money and the only thing left for me was to walk.

The mature mind realizes that not all facts are of equal importance, that certain facts influence others and stand in various relations to others. These relations can be represented by subordinating the less important facts.

When the play was over, I started to take a car for home, but *since* I found that I had no money, I was obliged to walk.

A list of the many kinds of subordinate clauses showing various relations between facts, and the connectives introducing them, will indicate how easy it is to escape from the monotony of "and" and "but" sentences.

1. Locative (place) . . . . . where
2. Temporal (time) . . . . . when, while
3. Causal (cause) . . . . . since, for, because
4. Concessive (concession) . . . . . although
5. Purpose . . . . . in order that
6. Result . . . . . so that
7. Conditional . . . . . if
8. Comparison . . . . . as . . . as
9. Relative . . . . . who, which, that

In exposition and argument, the complexity of the material necessitates the constant use of all sorts of subordinate clauses.

155. Coherence in Description and Narration. — In description and narration the details with which sentences deal stand in simpler relations to each other than is the case in exposition and argument. The relations are chiefly those of place and time. Furthermore, compound sentences are more numerous than in the analytic kinds of writing. Parallel constructions are effective in both description and narration.

Dyke, his hand on the grip of the valve that controlled the steam, his head out of the cab window, thundered on. He was back in his old place again; once more he was the engineer; once more he felt the engine quiver under him; the familiar noises were in his ears; the familiar buffeting of the wind surged, roaring at his face; the familiar odors of hot steam and smoke reeked in his nostrils, and on either side of him, parallel panoramas, the two halves of the landscape sliced, as it were, in two by the clashing wheels of his engine, streamed by in green and brown blurs.[1]

[1] Frank Norris, *The Octopus.*

The evening sky opened calm and benedictive, and the green country flowed on, the boat passed by ruins, castles and churches, and every day was alike until they reached the Shannon.[1]

EMPHASIS

Sentences written according to the principles of unity and coherence will undoubtedly be clear and correct, but they may be dull and flat. Clearness is not enough: you must arouse interest, hold the attention, and drive home your point; in short, be emphatic. The use of vigorous language, specific words, and vivid figures is naturally the simplest way of being emphatic. For the present, however, we are dealing not with the choice of words (see p. 286), but with the structure, the architecture, of sentences. There are many structural devices for securing emphasis, — length, repetition, subordination, position, inversion, periodic form, climax, and balance.

156. Length. — If a sentence is noticeably longer or shorter than other sentences near it, it makes the idea stand out conspicuously. The mere bulk of a sentence gives weight and momentum to the thought. (See the sentence by Bernard Shaw, p. 258.) On the other hand, a very short sentence flashes out a thought with sudden brilliancy. Note the surprising force of the last sentence in this little article, which is the briefest dramatic criticism on record:

Jerome K. Jerome's new piece, *Robina in Search of a Husband*, was produced last night. It is described on the program as an absurd play. It is. — London Daily Express.

[1] George Moore, *The Untilled Field*.

A crisp, compact sentence is effective in introducing a subject, as

Good English is exact English. — G. H. Palmer.

or in summing up a subject, as

Who raises woman raises mankind. — C. W. Eliot.
The cart and trumpet for me. — Bernard Shaw.

Adages, pithy comments on life, witty sayings, epigrams, are more emphatic the briefer they are:

Hitch your wagon to a star. — Emerson.

All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That is his. — Oscar Wilde.

A sword, a spade, and a thought should never be allowed to rust. — James Stephens.

Several short sentences together stir the feelings: they are particularly effective in persuasion and narration.

157. Repetition. — One of the simplest methods of gaining emphasis is to repeat a word or phrase which you wish to echo in your reader's mind.

The drowsy diligence lumbers along, amid drowsy talk of politics. — Carlyle.

Men are born into the State, are members of the State, must obey the laws enacted by the State, in time of danger must come to the defence of the State, must, if necessary, hazard their lives for the State. — Lyman Abbott.

Repetition is so powerful a weapon that you should not dull its edge by repeating words aimlessly just because your vocabulary is limited.

158. Subordination. — You should be on guard against the continual use of compound sentences. Nothing is more

irritating than such a primer-like style. The various parts of a sentence are not of equal importance, as was explained in the section on connectives. The most important idea in a sentence should be expressed in the main clause, and the less important ideas should be put into dependent clauses, or participial or other phrases. By this means the construction of the sentence will emphasize the chief idea. Reread Section 154 now, and note the list of subordinate clauses by means of which various relations of place, time, cause, etc., may be made clear. Compare these forms:

Baseball is one of my favorite sports, and every Saturday I go to the Braves Field to see a game.

Since baseball is one of my favorite sports, I go to the Braves Field to see a game every Saturday.

In the first sentence, made up of coördinate clauses, neither idea is thrown into relief. In the second, the cause is properly subordinated to the effect.

The use of participial phrases in subordination calls for special attention. When a part of a sentence which deserves to be put into the main clause has been put into a phrase, the sentence, though it may be grammatically correct, is faulty in emphasis. For example, let us take this sentence:

The rain increased, driving the people indoors.

Here the main idea would seem to be "the rain increased"; that the people were driven indoors would appear to be an incidental or minor fact accompanying the main action. But in all probability that is not what the writer meant. He probably meant to lay the emphasis

upon the fact that the people were driven indoors. If he did, he made a great mistake in putting that idea into a participial phrase. He should have said, " The increasing rain drove the people indoors." Here the form of the two ideas is made exactly the opposite of what it was in the original sentence. The participial phrase, then, is not the appropriate form for one of the main ideas in the sentence. The chief kinds of ideas which should find their way into participial phrases are:

1. *Causes.* In this sentence, " Opening the window, he soon cooled off the room," we have the participle properly used to express cause or means. Notice that to put the *result* of the action in a participial phrase (" He opened the window, cooling off the room ") would misrepresent the values of the ideas and destroy the emphasis.

2. *Minor Accompanying Actions.* The chief office of the participle is to express the action which (*a*) *precedes* or (*b*) *accompanies* the main action. Of the former sort (*a*) the following sentence will serve as an example: " Opening the book, he began to read aloud." Of the latter (*b*) an example is, " Lying upon the sofa, he read all the morning." Note in the next sentence how illogical and weak it is to put the events that happen *after* the main action in the trailing participles " catching " and " holding ": " Arnold mounted a horse and galloped after the animal, catching him by a tender part of the nostrils and holding him until he was tied." Common sense, therefore, assisted by the constant recollection that the participle has always the office of an adjective, will enable you to avoid marring the emphasis of your sentences by putting into participial phrases ideas which deserve to be put into clauses.

159. Position. — Try to place important words in positions where they will catch the eye, — that is, at the beginning and the end. An interesting illustration of the effect of this principle is a sentence which Professor Wendell [1] tells us he wrote only to find that it violated the very rule it expressed:

Be sure that your sentences end with words that deserve the distinction you give them.

On looking over the sentence he discovered that the unimportant words "be" and "them" were in the most emphatic positions. What were the most important words? he asked himself. Clearly, "end" and "distinction." Consequently, he struck out unnecessary words and rearranged the rest so that "end" and "distinction" should have proper emphasis:

End with words that deserve distinction.

The ideal expressed in this sentence you should always have in mind. In practice, however, there is often a conflict between this ideal and the idiom of the language. Since English in an uninflected tongue, it is sometimes impossible to put words in the most important positions. Idiom has the right of way. But after all, it is surprising to find how often idiom and emphasis go hand in hand.

1. The notable fact about the applause was its *genuineness.*
2. The thing that he least expected was *ridicule.*
3. *Great* as was the affection in which he was held, the affection which his father inspired was even *greater.*
4. If you want to see a big dog, you should see *mine.*

[1] Barrett Wendell, *English Composition,* pp. 102–103.

5. *Now* is the accepted time.
6. *Everywhere* he found the same result.
7. The plan is to be estimated by its *results*.

160. Inversion of the natural order of a sentence is an effective means of securing emphasis by position. Take the familiar Biblical sentence:

By their works ye shall know them.

Here, "works," although it lies in the middle of the sentence, is clearly the most emphatic word. The normal order of this sentence ("Ye shall know them by their works"), although it would bring "works" at the end of the sentence, would confer less distinction upon it than does the inverted order. The normal order of a sentence is (1) the subject, preceded or followed by its modifiers; (2) the verb; (3) the object of the verb; and (4) the predicate modifiers. To change this order is to emphasize whatever words in the sentence you may choose to remove from their normal position.

Vivid creature that she was, she must not lie forgotten. — G. H. Palmer.

Dear to their tender hearts as old china is a bad man they are mending. — George Meredith.

161. The Periodic Sentence is another device for gaining emphasis by position. All sentences are either *periodic* or *loose*. If a sentence suspends the complete sense until the end, it is called periodic. If it does not suspend the complete sense until the end, it is called loose. An idea may be expressed in either form; but study of the following sentences will show that the periodic form chains the reader's attention to the end.

Loose	Periodic
He returned in the afternoon.	In the afternoon he returned.
Paddling a canoe is difficult, unless one has had experience.	Unless one has had experience, paddling a canoe is difficult.
General Grant was brilliant in planning campaigns, and he was persistent in bringing them to a victorious conclusion.	General Grant was not only brilliant in planning campaigns, but was persistent in bringing them to a victorious conclusion.
He made repeated efforts to obtain work, but the end of the day found him still unsuccessful.	Although he made repeated efforts to obtain work, the end of the day still found him unsuccessful.

In case a sentence is long and has many modifiers, the periodic form prevents the reader's attention from wandering. In this loose sentence, find out how many times you can stop before reaching the end:

I wish you to see that both well-directed moral training and well-chosen reading lead to the possession of a power over the ill-guided and illiterate, which is, according to the measure of it, in the truest sense, *kingly;* conferring indeed the purest kingship that can exist among men: too many other kingships (however distinguished by visible insignia or material power) being either spectral, or tyrannous; — spectral — that is to say, aspects and shadows only of royalty, hollow as death, and which only the "likeness of a kingly crown have on"; or else tyrannous — that is to say, substituting their own will for the law of justice and love by which all true kings rule.[1]

[1] John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies,* Lecture II.

Contrast this with a long periodic sentence:

If the Socialists did not know the difficulties of Socialism better than their opponents, and were not therefore far sterner Tories than the tariff reformers and far sounder Liberals than the free-traders; if all decent men were not nine-tenths Socialists to begin with, whether they know it or not; if there were any possibility of controversy as to the fundamental proposition of Socialism that whoever does not by the work of his prime repay the debt of his nurture and education, support himself in his working days, and provide for his retirement, inflicts on society precisely the same injury as a thief, then indeed the prospect would be black for civilization.[1]

As you observe, in a periodic sentence the subordinate clauses and phrases come first and the main clause comes last. Consequently, proper subordination plus periodic form will prove the best remedy for a weak and straggling style.

162. Climax. — The arrangement of words, phrases, and clauses in the order of climax — that is, in an ascending series, or "ladder" — makes a sentence very emphatic by causing a continual heightening of interest.

One flower, one tree, one baby, one bird singing, or one little village would move her to love and praise as surely as a garden, a forest, a university, an orchestra, or a great city. — C. W. Eliot.

A philosopher is like a blind man in a dark cellar hunting for a black cat that is not there.

The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and

[1] George Bernard Shaw, *Socialism and Superior Brains.*

cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. — Dr. Johnson.

So great is our craving for the boom of a bass drum at the end that an anti-climax disappoints and irritates us. You may, however, intentionally use anti-climax to produce a humorous effect. Sometimes, too, you may deliberately employ the surprise of an anti-climax to shock your readers into emotion.[1]

163. Balance. — Parallel structure, which we found so valuable a means of securing coherence (see § 153), is also a vigorous way of securing emphasis. When you arrange words, phrases, or clauses in one part of a sentence, and then repeat this arrangement in another part, the expressions which are thus balanced receive a strong accent. If the ideas in these balanced expressions are in contrast, the device is called *antithesis* (that is, "the setting of one thing over against another"). In this way the contrasted ideas are made to stand out from their frames with memorable distinctness.

To *err* is *human;* to *forgive*, *divine*. — Pope.

A cynic is a man who knows the *price* of *everything* and the *value* of *nothing*. — Oscar Wilde.

I *sighed* as a *lover;* I *obeyed* as a *son*. — Gibbon.

What I *do* about slavery and the colored race, I *do* because I *believe* it helps to save the Union; and what I *forbear*, I *forbear* because I *do not believe* it would help to save the Union. — Lincoln.

Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation *survive*, and the other would *accept* war rather than let it *perish*. — Lincoln.

[1] See the sentence by Senator Lodge on page 105.

Books are the *best* of things, *well used; abused*, among the *worst*. — EMERSON.

If the *flights* of *Dryden* therefore are higher, *Pope* continues *longer on the wing*. If of *Dryden's* fire the *blaze* is *brighter*, of *Pope's* the *heat* is more *regular and constant*. *Dryden* often *surpasses* expectation, and *Pope* never *falls below* it. *Dryden* is read with *frequent astonishment*, and *Pope* with *perpetual delight*. — DR. JOHNSON.

164. Emphasis in Description and Narration. — In description, where many details of sight or sound cry for simultaneous expression in a sentence, it is necessary that you give the most significant ones the strongest accent. In narration, where the time order of events may often tempt you to string out your statements in compound sentences, variety of construction will save you from monotony. In using various subordinating clauses and phrases, however, you should beware of the danger of putting main ideas into dependent clauses, or of giving false emphasis to less important ideas by placing them in main clauses.

VARIETY

When you are engaged in writing sentences, the purpose and nature of the composition and your own mood and temperament will influence the way in which you apply the structural principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis. Students are often made to feel that they should all write alike, that every sentence should wear the same uniform, that every composition should be as conventionally dressed as men in evening clothes. Consequently, instead of trying to be individual, every one tries to look

like every one else to escape attention, and is delighted if he is mistaken for some one else. Writing should not have negative virtues. You should not expect to be praised just because you *don't* do things. Have positive virtues, "be different," and flavor your writing with the spice of variety. There are many methods of gaining variety, of giving sentences their own tang, charm, or surprise.

165. Vary the Length of Sentences. — One of the most unpleasant forms of monotony is the succession of sentences which seem to be measured off by a foot-rule. Too many long sentences make a style ponderous; too many short ones make it choppy. Short sentences (see § 156) are very emphatic, particularly in enforcing an idea which has been fully developed. They are highly effective in narration, where they aid rapidity of movement. Use long, short, and medium-length sentences according to the nature of the thought, and the purpose you have in mind.

166. Don't Repeat Words Aimlessly. — It is annoying to find the same words repeated indiscriminately in many sentences of a composition. This serious fault is caused by an impoverished vocabulary. Inexperienced writers use half a dozen adjectives or half a dozen verbs to express any idea on any subject. You should repeat words only when you have a definite purpose in doing so, such as securing clearness and coherence, or reiterating an idea emphatically.

167. Don't Use Compound Sentences Continually. — The so-called "and" and "but" sentences result in a primer-like style which becomes intolerably monotonous. Frequently such sentences do not show the proper relations between ideas. Learn to use subordinate clauses of various

kinds (see p. 250 for a list). By writing all sorts of complex sentences you will make your style flexible.

168. Mingle Loose and Periodic Sentences. — The continual use of the periodic form causes stiffness and artificiality. On the other hand, too many loose sentences, especially if they are long, produce the effect of straggling weakness. If you need to make a sentence long, you had better make it periodic. You can keep a loose sentence firmly in hand by means of parallel structure or balance (see the sentence by Ruskin, p. 257).

169. Don't Harness an Adjective with Every Noun. — This mannerism is very irritating. For example:

The *mid-day* sun poured down his *blazing* rays in *perpendicular* shafts far and wide upon the *baked* alkali plain in *central* Arizona. As I looked far ahead into the *furnace-like* heat lying over the *shimmering* sand, I cruelly jabbed a *wicked* Mexican spur into the flank of my *jaded* bronco to urge him out of his *snail-like* pace.

The continual recurrence of adjectives not only causes a monotonous tom-tom beat in a sentence, but diminishes the force of both adjective and noun.

170. Vary the Beginnings of Sentences. — It is tedious to read sentence after sentence beginning with the subject, as in this case:

On his journey to Northumberland, Francis Osbaldistone spends Sunday at an inn. A timorous fellow traveller is there, named Morris. They are joined by a Scotch drover, by name Campbell. His appearance is interesting to the reader. He has strength of character very plainly to be seen and felt by the entire party. Everyone feels that he is not what he appears to be. The reader feels this, and is thereby interested to follow

him further. Osbaldistone has some conversation with Campbell and Morris, his fellow traveller. Morris has a fancy that Osbaldistone is planning to rob him of the treasure he is carrying to Scotland. He prevails on Campbell to travel with him, to protect himself. Campbell is very unwilling to do this, but finally accedes to his request.

The monotony and abruptness of these sentences can be remedied by inversion, subordination, and condensation.

At the inn where he spent Sunday on his journey to Northumberland, Francis Osbaldistone fell in with a timorous traveller by the name of Morris. At the same inn was a Scotch drover named Campbell, a fascinatingly mysterious person of strong character who gave an impression of being more than he seemed. Since Morris fancied that Osbaldistone was planning to rob him of the treasure which he was carrying to Scotland, he prevailed upon Campbell, in spite of the latter's unwillingness, to travel with him as protector.

RHYTHM

171. The Rhythm of Prose. — Prose hath her melodies no less renowned than verse. In poetry the rhythm is regular — that is, the arrangement of accented and unaccented syllables can be measured off into uniform feet, or meter. In prose the rhythm is irregular and has variety of accent. The presence of regularity of beat in prose is always regarded as a blemish. If a writer's emotions are so strong that they express themselves in a well-defined pulse and throb, he should be writing poetry, not prose. The effect of falling into singsong is illustrated by these examples: the first from Dickens's account of the death of Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop:*

When Death strikes down the innocent and young,
for every fragile form from which he lets
the panting spirit free,
a hundred virtues rise,
in shapes of mercy, charity, and love,
to walk the world and bless it.

the next from Blackmore's *Lorna Doone:*

For certain and for ever this I knew, as in a glory,
that Lorna Doone had now begun and would go on to love me.

this from a speech on the Payne tariff bill by a young Congressman — which so amused the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*[1] that he set it forth "in its real and ravishing metrical magnificence":

I know that history sings of Emperors,
Of Senators and Presidents,
Of commanders of eloquence, of industry and arms;
Of temples, monuments and capitols;
Of wars, crusades, intrigues;
Of forums, congresses and courts.
It tells of rulers, not the ruled;
Of leaders, not the led.
It tells of statesmen, not the mass
Who made them; of warriors bold,
Not the nameless myriads who died
To build another's fame.
It tells of pyramids, not the sodden serfs
Who built them; of palaces,
Not the weary hands that reared them up.
It tells of captains of mighty industry,
Not the faces at the loom; nor yet
The muscles at the anvil and the plow;
Not the fingers on the throttle and the brake.

[1] May 15, 1909.

Contrast with this monotonous singsong an example of good prose rhythm which has variety of beat:

That is the | noise of the | spring — | a vibrating | boom |
which is neither bees, | nor falling | water, | nor the wind |
in tree-tops, | but the purring | of the warm, | happy world. | [1]

Read this aloud and note how the melody of it pleases the ear. The secret of this effect is that Kipling continually changes the arrangement of accents. To be sure, the same measure may be repeated once or twice as in the beginning — ∪∪ | — ∪∪ | or at the end ∪∪ — | ∪∪ — | ; but the author stops before the repetition of the measure becomes noticeable. There are no *rules* for being rhythmical; the only guide is a musical ear. A few devices may be mentioned, however, which will enable you to secure good rhythmical effects.

172. Parallel Structure. — Parallel structure, or balance, which we have found so valuable in making sentences both coherent and emphatic, will also help to make them rhythmical. Balance itself is an agreeable kind of melody. When the ear has heard a thought expressed in a certain form, it is pleased to hear an accompanying or contrasting thought expressed in an echo of that form. Read aloud the balanced sentences on page 259. If the second part of the balance contains the same arrangement of accents as the first, the pleasure is heightened. Take Thackeray's description of Beatrix Esmond: [2]

. . . whose eyes | were fire, | whose look | was love |

[1] Rudyard Kipling, "The Spring Running," in *The Jungle Book.*

[2] *Henry Esmond,* Bk. II, Ch. vii.

If, however, this measure were repeated too many times, the result would be singsong; consequently, Thackeray shifts the order and number of beats in the next balancing member:

whose voice | was the sweetest | low song |

A few lines later he changes to another series of balanced phrases:

agile as | a nymph, | lofty as | a queen |

and then to vary the rhythm changes to yet a third series:

now melting, | now imperious, | now sarcastic |

A sentence by Stevenson admirably illustrates this principle of variety in parallel structure:

> And there are still others, less pliable, less capable, less fortunate, perhaps less base, who continue, even in these isles of plenty, to lack bread.[1]

In the series of parallel phrases, the first three have the same accent:

less pliable, | less capable, | less fortunate |

Stevenson has a fourth idea to add, but realizing that his repeated accents are coming perilously near to a metrical tune, he breaks the rhythm, and instead of saying "less base perhaps," he adroitly shifts the beat to "perhaps less base." This change also throws the emphasis on "base" and makes it the top of the climax.

[1] R. L. Stevenson, *The Ebb-Tide*, Ch. i.

173. Rise and Fall. — The foregoing example illustrates another device for securing rhythm, namely, rise and fall. The sentence moves in a beautiful curve, which may be compared to the graceful glide of an airplane. It rises from the ground in a gradual ascent, reaches a certain height (in this case at the words " perhaps less base "), maintains its flight at this level for a time (to the words " isles of plenty "), and then sweeps down to the ground again (with the phrase " to lack bread "). This gentle fall at the end is called a *cadence.* You should be very careful that a sentence which has been winging its way happily does not break its wings by falling to the earth abruptly. Take another example, a famous sentence by Sir William Temple:

When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over.

Read this aloud and note that the rise, level flight, and fall give the sentence a melody of itself quite apart from the pleasing variation in the beats. The cadence " and then the care is over " has been praised for many generations as one of the finest in the language. Another illustration:

The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. — GIBBON.

174. The Magic Number Three. — A very attractive device is the three-part sentence, or triad, that is, a sentence composed of three clauses. The number three pro-

duces a satisfying effect of finish, and rounds out the sentence with an ample swing.

No plan of study was recommended for my use; no exercises were prescribed for his inspection; and, at the most precious season of youth, whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labour or amusement, without advice or account. — GIBBON.

She [Elizabeth] rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Essex with a box on the ear; she would break now and then into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. — J. R. GREEN.

If, as in these instances, the first two members are fairly short and parallel in movement, and the third part is longer and more elaborate, the sentence has a melody all its own. Here climax and rhythm are bound up together. One of the most famous sentences in literature, the last sentence of Sir Walter Ralegh's *History of the World*, owes its beautiful form to the "magic number three," to balance, and to "rise and fall."

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet.*

First comes the prelude of three adjectives, forming a miniature climax. The sentence sweeps on through two absolutely balanced members, each of which has its own internal balance:

whom *none* could *advise, thou* hast *persuaded;*
what *none* hath *dared, thou* hast *done;*

The third member also balances these, but, to vary the arrangement of beats, breaks into a larger movement and has a marked "rise":

and whom *all the world* hath *flattered, thou only* hast *cast out of the world and despised;*

The second half of this member is now balanced by a clause which continues the upward flight to a grand climax; then the sentence closes with an impressive cadence:

thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet.*

175. Polysyllabic Words. — The two vocabularies in the English language — the short Anglo-Saxon words and the many-syllabled, resonant Latin words — can be woven together to produce attractive rhythmical effects. As Pater says, "Racy Saxon monosyllables, close to us as touch and sight, he will intermix with those long, savoursome Latin words, rich in 'second intention.'" Milton, for example, who was so fond of the "organ tone," uses polysyllables after a series of short words to secure majestic rhythm: speaking of the "scattered limbs of Truth," he says:

We have not yet found them all, lords and commons, nor ever shall do, till her master's second coming; he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection.

On account of their variety of accents and vowel sounds, long words often combine into flowing, musical sentences, thus:

They sprawl in palm-leaf verandas, and entertain an island audience with memoirs of the music-hall. — STEVENSON.

Try to substitute short words here — " and please a group of islanders with tales of the music-hall " — and the beauty vanishes. Often one long word well placed makes all the difference in the world. Take Thackeray's eloquent close of the chapter in *Henry Esmond* which tells about the death of the Duke of Hamilton in a duel:

Esmond thought of the courier, now galloping on the North road to inform him, who was Earl of Arran yesterday, that he was Duke of Hamilton to-day, and of a thousand great schemes, hopes, ambitions, that were alive in the gallant heart, beating a few hours since, and now in a little dust quiescent.

That last word is a master stroke. This adjective coming, by inverted order, last, keeps the attention to the end, and its lingering three syllables make a cadence of exquisite beauty. Try a shorter word, " quiet," put it in the normal order and note how pitifully flat the phrase becomes: " and now quiet in a little dust." Then read aloud, " and now in a little dust quiescent." One more example, for this is a very important matter — a sentence by Carlyle. Read it aloud first *without* the word " indiscriminate," and then see the effect *with* it:

The very knives and forks they ate with have rusted to the heart, and become brown oxide of iron, and mingled with the indiscriminate clay.[1]

[1] See also the sentence by Dr. Johnson on page 130.

176. Rhythm in Synge's Works. — The writer who has done more to revivify the English language than any other modern author is the late John M. Synge, the Irish dramatist. The racy idiom in which he wrote his plays "tastes to the ear as a nut piques the teeth." Synge dug his dialect from the soil. Living with the peasants, he recorded their words and turns of phrase. He brought to literature a fresh, vivid, and musical speech, full of the echoes of early Celtic constructions.

When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen*, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen. This matter, I think, is of importance, for in countries where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality, which is the root of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form.[1]

The words in our mouths and books to-day are mostly dead, on account of constant use; they are like worn coppers passed from hand to hand; they have little power to quicken our imagination. But in Synge we get a sense of what language was when it was new.

"I do be thinking in the long nights it was a big fool I was that time, Michael Dara; for what good is a bit of a farm with cows on it, and sheep on the back hills, when you do be sitting looking out from a door, and seeing nothing but the mists rolling down the bog, and the mists again and they rolling up the bog, and hear nothing but the wind crying out in the bits of

[1] J. M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*, Preface.

broken trees were left from the great storm, and the streams roaring with the rain." [1]

"That's a hard, terrible stick, Timmy; and isn't it a poor thing to be cutting strong timber the like of that, when it's cold the bark is, and slippy with the frost of the air?" [2]

"And saying to myself another time, to look on Peggy Cavanagh, who had the lightest hand at milking a cow that wouldn't be easy, or turning a cake, and there she is now walking round on the roads, or sitting in a dirty old house, with no teeth in her mouth, and no sense, and no more hair than you'd see on a bit of hill and they after burning the furze from it." [3]

What flavor of words, what charm of primitive construction, what melody of cadence! Read Synge's plays — read them aloud — and try to catch his rhythms when you write. One of the two best love scenes in English drama since Shakespeare occurs in his *Playboy of the Western World* (the other is in Masefield's *Tragedy of Nan*). The imaginative splendor and cosmic sweep of images almost take our breath away. Christy says to Pegeen:

"If the mitred bishops seen you that time, they'd be the like of the holy prophets, I'm thinking, do be straining the bars of Paradise to lay eyes on the Lady Helen of Troy, and she abroad, pacing back and forward, with a nosegay in her golden shawl."

EXERCISES

Unity

I. Write a short theme in which every sentence shall have unity of substance.

[1] J. M. Synge, *The Shadow of the Glen.*
[2] J. M. Synge, *The Well of the Saints.*
[3] J. M. Synge, *The Shadow of the Glen.*

II. Write a short theme in which every sentence shall have unity of expression.

III. Reconstruct the following sentences. If necessary, split them up into unified sentences.

1. Gareth's duty was over he had won his knighthood and the esteem and love of both Elaine and King Arthur.

2. His whole nature changed instead of the kind, good, and generous man, he became a harsh, tyrannical and imperious ruler.

3. Addison was born in 1672 he went to college, graduated, travelled over nearly all Europe, and engaged in politics.

4. That day a young lady asked a boon of the king, she desired Lancelot to combat for her and when Gareth asked permission for this undertaking it was willingly granted much to the disgust of the maiden.

5. Perhaps my most gratifying result was the reading of several of Edgar Allan Poe's works, I like his style, his clear and strong description.

6. When Macbeth was sent to the frontier to fight with the Norwegians, in absence of Duncan, he fought with the true spirit of patriotism, though he could easily have sold the kingdom into the hands of Norway, yet he remained faithful.

7. The bearing of Antonio in the Trial Scene, is so beautiful that it seems rather above human, refusing to fawn and beg mercy of the revengeful Jew, he prefers to take his punishment and take it like a man.

8. The characters in Comus are too affected, too wooden, they are not natural, especially the brothers, to act as they do, would be impossible in real life.

9. The Johnson Club was a club composed of such men as Johnson, Burke, Boswell, Goldsmith, Reynolds and others, the purpose of it was to get together at a quiet social gathering and discuss literary topics, and this kind of thing was in those days as beneficial as the great libraries of to-day, because the best wits of the day gathered there and talked over the social conditions, that prevailed at that time, and the fact that John-

son was a member ought to be sufficient evidence for any one that it was a success, for nowhere in the history of the world, was there ever a greater conversationalist than he.

10. Bassanio was the son of a gentleman and he was also on the Rialto a great deal of the time.

11. There were two brothers and their sister walking through a wood and in some way the sister became separated from her brothers and met a man who offered to show her the way.

12. Addison was a stout Whig and he had an office, that netted him about three hundred pounds a year, as secretary for Ireland and Secretary of State but when Queen Anne came into power she, being a strong Tory, threw out all the Whig members of the Government.

13. The maiden wanders in the woods, and is tempted by the surrounding evils, and is led astray from the enchantress Comus, who offers her a drink, which if taken would change her into the form of an animal like unto her many converts whom she has foiled by the deluding liquor.

14. He finds her lost in the forest so makes her think that he is a shepherd thus bringing her to his palace where he tempts her in every way possible but she always gives him an answer which he cannot overthrow.

15. She taught me to knit and I remember very well my first lessons and the curious way the stitches had of getting themselves dropped or in some mysterious way vanishing altogether and my strip of stitches would gradually grow narrower and narrower.

16. On my return to America in 1899 I went to a private teacher who gave me a great deal of work to do in English composition — besides the work of the Episcopal academy which I was also attending.

17. Dear Madám : — Your letter received and what you ask of me to make you a dress for New Years I will Be Very Glad to do same and for a fact think it will be done for same time as you state.

18. Hawthorne was in the same class with Longfellow, at Bowdoin and in the class above him was Franklin Pierce.

19. In order to find out whether there was any politics mixed up with the affair I saw a lot more of the residents of the city who were not connected specially with the school or the committee and I came to the conclusion that politics didn't have anything to do with it, but I did determine that there were a few jealous bodies here and there who were keeping up the disturbance evidently for the purpose of bringing about certain kind of results that would be pleasing to them, but which nobody in particular could really tell what they was a drivin' at.

20. Because in recent years large football teams have failed to make a good showing on account of experimenting on them near the close of the season when there was not enough time to become acquainted with them.

21. My bonnet fell off, and I picked it up by the crown and as I hastened on, the streamers trailed in the dust and were ruined, while on Sunday I wore my plain muslin baby's cap to church.

22. Only fruit trees grow within the town's limits, and John S. Duss is its ruler.

23. So, after an adorable drive around that sapphire crescent, the Bay of Naples, with Capri smiling at us from afar, an opal in a turquoise setting, we climbed the steep hills of Posilipo, past the castle of the Donna Anna, and stopped before a portal where huge golden fish, dolphins, and mermaids wove themselves into a sign which notified us that here one Trattoria dello Scoglio di Frisio was to be reached by descending the narrow stone steps that lead through an excavation like a grotto, and through which we emerged to find ourselves looking out from a high platform over the sea, which seems bluer than ever here, on the long terrace overhanging the sea below the Strada Nuova del Posilipo, forgetting the hunger gnawing at our vitals, almost breathless at the beauty of the scene before us, the ruined castle jutting out into the water on one side of us and the wonderful gardens of a lovely villa dipping into it on the other.

24. We reached Boston about ten o'clock and the rest of the morning was spent in shopping.

25. Like a sentinel he guarded the door, and every one, not wearing an apron, was challenged.

26. We do not know all things, nevertheless some things are known by us.

27. . . . A thing which I have often thought of doing, although it has never been practiced by me to any extent.

28. What greater pleasure could anyone ask than to find some sequestered nook and to forget everything, hear nothing and see nothing except the page before you.

29. If it is too warm in the sun you can paddle into some cool shade where one may read, talk, or sleep if you choose without being disturbed.

Coherence

Order

I. Write a theme in which every sentence shall have good order.

II. Arrange the parts of the following sentences so that the meaning cannot be misunderstood:

1. Godfrey Cass was called away from a nice time where his loved Nancy was together with the doctor by Silas Marner who had found Godfrey's daughter in his home instead of his gold.

2. In the causes that Shylock gives for hating Antonio, just before lending the money if all he said was true, some of the things that Antonio did was not quite like a gentleman, although he may have been provoked to such an extent that no human being could have contained himself.

3. The sun shone bright when I was dressing for the first time, since my arrival.

4. The poultry stalls were decorated with game birds, bear, elk, and deer, as well as the more common kinds of poultry.

5. It is easy to see how it was possible for the Scotch to repel the Romans and to for so long a time withstand England.

6. This stone is erected to the memory of Wm. Brown, accidentally shot as a mark of affection by his brother.

7. To Elizabeth who wished to be beautiful without having any beauty and to fascinate without having the power of fascination, it was a deadly blow.

8. The storm broke just as we reached the shore with great violence.

9. Do you ever expect to go again?

10. I walked out into the night as the moon rose and wandered through the grounds.

11. The cashier of the bank, whether large or small, is a very busy man.

12. By protection is meant the levying of a duty on goods when brought into a country for the purpose of protecting the home industries.

13. She only saw a black eclipse bobbing up and down before her eyes.

14. He made the above speech, whereof Francis only heard the last two lines.

15. The Duchess only gives away her plays to the foreigners of distinction who visit her kind little Court.

Dangling Modifiers

I. Reconstruct the following sentences:

1. While waiting in the court, a noble maiden named Lynette entered and asked the king, to give her Sir Launcelot.

2. Although blest with a loving wife, she was too ambitious for the welfare of her husband.

3. Having reared his daughter and having tried to inculcate in her, the loftiest ideals of his race, it is sad to gaze upon him after her elopement.

4. After serving as kitchen knave for a few months, his mother relented and set him free from his promise.

5. He procured horses for the purpose of pursuing me, but having the start of him by four or five hours he found it impossible to overtake me.

6. While studying in my room yesterday, a large bumblebee came buzzing in through the open window.

7. Although not exactly a fault in English I find more trouble with punctuation than any other thing.

8. In spite of the trouble he took with his argument it did not affect his previous cutting.

9. William Gillette, reappearing in the six greatest characters of his six greatest plays, is no ordinary announcement. Taken by itself, without any amplifications, every playgoer will recognize it as the most interesting and ingenious idea of the present theatrical year.

10. Believing that the work of education in technical subjects by means of correspondence may be made efficient and helpful beyond what has hitherto been accomplished, arrangements have been made so that the professors and instructors of engineering of the faculty of the Armour Institute of Technology will constitute a board of instruction, revision and examination for the American School of Correspondence.

11. While in a broker's office to-day, a little hunchbacked vender entered.

12. Forced to fly her husband's roof by this insult, the coward had pursued his revenge by taking her child from her.

13. So inquiring of the boy "where Mrs. Harris lived," he gave me full directions and a little of my aunt's history besides.

14. While thus approaching, as all hoped, to convalescence, Miss Briggs was the only victim admitted into the presence of the invalid.

15. This is the Circular of the house I spoke to you about. If interested further they will no doubt send their Catalogues if you will write or call upon them.

II. Make the following phrases depend coherently upon main clauses:

1. Having arrived at the theater a few minutes early,.....
2. Glancing about the room,.....
3. Being the larger of the two books,.....
4. Floating here and there,.....
5. Being our nearest neighbors,.....
6. After lowering the window,.....
7. After riding all the afternoon,.....

III. Complete the following sentences by making a main clause for each. In each case keep the same subject in both clauses.

1. Although the woodman had already cut down two trees,
.....
2. Although two trees had already been cut down by the woodman,.....
3. When he had measured the distance with his eye,.....
4. As long as he remained satisfied with our work,.....
5. If John had arrived before you left,.....

Reference

I. Rewrite the following sentences:

1. While neighbors assisted in an effort to rescue the cows, many of them were so badly burned that they had to be shot.

2. The water drizzled through my umbrella and I had some thoughts of throwing it away when it stopped as suddenly as it had begun.

3. The fox's keen scent and good hearing keeps him from being shot many times by bounty seekers. One of their important characteristics is their faculty for aiding one another.

4. The conductor finally threatened to put the man off the car, but the fellow was so good natured he didn't have the heart to do it.

5. After Pope left Addison and the report reached him that

his former friend gave aid to a man in getting out a translation of Homer rivalling his own, he sent Addison some verses filled with the bitterest condemnation. Having received these, he said that Mr. Addison treated him very civilly ever after.

6. Every one should guard against localisms, as he is not understood by a stranger if he or she uses localisms, and in many cases the stranger would not form a good opinion of you.

7. Pope is much given to *grots* and *finny tribe* and *tinkling rills*. But these were characteristics of his age and in these he excelled.

8. The employer listens to a number of idiotic questions, and then provoked over his disobedience looks up the word himself.

9. In a former report we pointed out how logically most of the briefs had been constructed and how well they had analyzed their subjects — with the exception of Mr. Brown; but in this error we must confess that they have not fulfilled the promise of their previous work.

10. The *Iliad* and the *Æneid* were written in Latin and Greek.

Parallel Constructions

I. Write a theme which shall include at least four cases of parallel structure.

II. Reconstruct the following sentences:

1. The Club served to make them acquainted with one another also knit them together closely and to punish each other's faults.

2. They see ahead of them a woman whom Red Murdock says is crazy; that she wanders about through the forest; that it would be better for the neighborhood if she were killed.

3. In spite of Johnson's rough, rude ways and although he ate like a pig, he had many friends.

4. Our hatred is changed to compassion when we hear stern Portia as judge declare that one-half his goods must be surrendered to the state the other half to Antonio and his life to lie on the mercy of the man against whom he has plotted.

5. When Macbeth, valor's minion, was informed by the witches of his being the future king and although the wording gladly struck his ears, his first thought and pleasure was to write his wife, so that she might share the happiness of such a thought.

6. The following acts are forbidden by law: stealing; that one should kill his fellow man; to lie in court.

7. He could make her come to him at any time and no matter how far distant she was.

8. Not only should an automobile be kept clean for the looks, but dirt is bound to injure the paint.

9. President Roosevelt to-day took notice of his return visit to Massachusetts by delivering at Fitchburg another speech on the trust question in order that he might fully answer his critics and in order to more clearly define his attitude on that subject.

10. By a description the writer's ideas are so expressed as to make the picture realistic, and which will convey to your thoughts some similar occurrence.

11. One of the ways of this professor was to glance around the class and the first bright looking young lady who attracted his attention he was sure to call upon to recite.

12. Ice-making is a science which is both still in its infancy, and of great importance in the warm climates.

13. The most used of facings is sea-coal, which is a black powder, very soft, and when smoothed out gives a glaze to the mold.

14. A caller came to our back door — one of our townsmen who had been in the West for years, having come back to see his relations.

15. His story of the "Mexican Situation" is not only the story of an intelligent observer who lived in Mexico during the administrations of Diaz, Madero, Huerta, down to the time of Carranza and Villa, but as a plantation manager he came in close contact with the laboring classes and has an intimate

and sympathetic knowledge of the condition and problems of the common people.

III. Fill out the following sentences so as to make balanced constructions:

1. It may be read *either* for pleasure *or* .....
2. It may *either* be read *or* .....
3. It may be *either* read *or* .....
4. He *not only* promised to do this *but also* .....
5. He promised *not only* to do this *but also* .....
6. He promised to do *not only* this *but also* .....
7. *His first* suggestion was a *failure; his second* .....
8. *His first* suggestion was to *compromise; his second* .....
9. Our intention was *not so much* that you should do all this yourself *as* .....
10. Plays are all too often *not only* miscast but .....

Connectives

I. Write a theme entirely of complex sentences.

II. Write a theme with no compound sentences.

III. Reconstruct the following sentences:

1. The possibilities of this copper company are exceptional and it is in an exceedingly strong position and has a huge ore tonnage already blocked out.

2. The dock was about six feet above the surface and very easy to climb out upon.

3. The duck splashed a few times in the water but soon she appeared perfectly quiet and would never again enjoy a morning's swim but would instead be enjoyed at some dinner table.

4. It was very cold this afternoon while we were out on the river rowing and the cold greatly increased and snowflakes came slowly passing by causing a general shudder.

5. I was going home and on the way I asked the baggage master at the station and he told me the next train was on the

branch line, but when the train arrived I found it was the main line train and so I got on hoping to get home.

6. The story read in class to-day, though it was written very smoothly and interestingly, represents Kaa as one of the most intelligent among the animals.

7. Although a family greatly to be pitied, these deaf and dumb people excite much sympathy and interest from the other occupants of the car.

8. Although Portia's sense of filial devotion to her dead father's memory bids her comply with his wishes, none of her suitors please her fancy.

Emphasis

I. Write a theme in which every sentence shall end vigorously.

II. Write a theme which shall include one periodic sentence of at least fifty words.

III. Write a theme which shall include four periodic sentences of varying length.

IV. Write a theme which shall include four cases of climax.

V. Write a theme which shall include four cases of balance.

VI. Reconstruct these sentences so that they shall be emphatic:

1. We started on our way down Mt. Washington by the carriage road instead of the path as it is a much easier way not being so steep, when we had seen all the things on the top and it was time to start back.

2. He is somewhat erratic, a good theme being followed by a poor one in two instances.

3. Tom and Harry withdrew, as Tom discovered that he was not a member of the athletic club from which the pair was entered, having allowed his membership to lapse.

4. His tall figure, gray beard and snow-white hair make him a conspicuous person to behold, as he walks along the street looking at the little children.

5. The scene that met our eyes was one that would make a strong man shudder and give an excitable person nervous prostration.

6. I will continue my college course until I get a degree if I can keep on making my college expenses, in part, at least.

7. A murder case in England will be disposed of in a day or two that here will take much longer.

8. A market such as we have had for some months cannot go on forever, without these occasional setbacks, as we pointed out a few weeks ago in this connection.

9. It was only reasonable to expect that this mining stock would follow the general trend, considering the serious cause responsible for the decline.

10. Frederick II, knowing six languages, was able to converse freely with the great scholars of his court, thus deriving much important and enlightening information.

11. Every momentous struggle between two great parties produces its quota of remarkable personalities, the conflict between the Empire and the Papacy during the medieval period being no exception to this rule.

VII. Rewrite ten of the sentences on pages 273–282 with special attention to emphasis.

Variety

I. Rewrite this letter of a girl guide. Avoid the passive voice as far as possible.

Dressed in their neat navy blue costumes, the girls walked two by two, under the guidance of their officers, a distance of some two miles. Barr Beacon, their destination, was reached, and there a halt was called for rest. Keen appetites acted as reminders that haversacks contained means of satisfying the inner demands, but with the eatables drink was necessary, and to prepare the tea and cocoa hot water was required. Search parties were sent out for a supply of fuel, and, when sufficient was brought in, it was stacked up. The application of a single

match — a lesson in economy — resulted in a good fire, and boiling water was soon ready.

It was delightful to see with what relish the food was eaten, and scarcely a crumb remained; so keen was the appetite stimulated by the march in the fresh air. Here was the simple life with all the joys of youth. After tea, there was the usual girl chat with plenty of fun and merriment, but this was brought to an end by commands to business.

Locality was taught by observation of prominent landmarks, and nominal prizes were awarded to those who first recognized Walsall Town Hall, the different churches, and other conspicuous objects. Then followed some smart exercises in lifting and carrying the wounded. Despatches were forwarded to headquarters, and an examination of the wild plants, of which each Guide collected only one specimen of each variety, proved that nearly thirty flowering plants were blooming in the vicinity of the camp. Organized games were on the programme, and a game of hide-and-seek was the more enjoyable because the winding lanes and numerous bushes gave admirable cover.

Rest was called, and some happy moments were spent round the camp fire, as one after another of the troop related her favourite story. "Fall in" was sounded and the return walk commenced. The ruddy faces of the girls showed the beneficial effects of the country air, and the chats with their friends afterwards proved that much useful knowledge had been gained by experience.

Part IV

DICTION

CHAPTER VIII

CHOICE OF WORDS

177. Good Use. — The English language is made up of a great many elements, each of which, as soon as it has once secured its place, has as much right to be in the language as any other. There is no reason why we should prefer words of Latin origin (like *orator*, *quorum*, *vim*, or *species*) merely because they are of Latin origin, or words of Anglo-Saxon lineage (like *wanton*, *ridge*, or *shield*) merely because they are of that descent. With entire impartiality we take *epaulette* from the French, *yacht* from the Dutch, *soprano* from the Italian, and *kindergarten* from the German; and we welcome them all.

Usage with regard to words is fixed, therefore, without respect to origin: it depends upon Present, National, and Reputable Usage.

178. Present Use. — The temptation is slight nowadays to commit the error of using words which should — except perhaps in poetry — be relegated to the past.[1] At present the temptation is rather to adopt words[2] before they have really taken their place in the language.

[1] Though such affectations as *anent*, *whilom*, and *withal* now and then appear.

[2] Like *enthuse*, *write-up*, *phone*, the adjective *swell* or the noun *probe* (meaning investigation).

179. National Use. — National Use means American usage as opposed to British use;[1] and the usage of careful writers and speakers all over America, as opposed to the usage of a particular class or locality.

180. Reputable Use.[2] — Reputable Use means, not the practice of a few purists who are unreasonably devoted to the past or to theory, but the customary usage of such writers and speakers as are competent to direct the destinies of a living language. Such usage is opposed to slang, of which we now have a great deal. No careful writer or speaker would use in describing a game of baseball such terms as *fans* for *spectators*, *bags* for *bases*, *garden* for *outfield*, or *twirler* for *pitcher*. Of course, nearly every one permits himself now and then to drop into slang, but to be habitually or unwittingly slangy in speech or in writing is to debase one's own style and mind and also to assist in degrading the mother tongue.

The sources of authority are the dictionary, and the speech and the writings of the masters. It is important to remember that the dictionary, though it has many notes on colloquial, vulgar, and archaic words, usually indicates merely the boundary line between what is positively wrong and what is merely allowable. But no careful writer is content with what is merely allowable: he wishes to know what is best. Only constant attention to the work of the best writers and speakers will serve to keep him informed.

Since the requirements of a good style are Clearness,

[1] Such as *lift* for *elevator*, *carriage* for *car*, *corn* for *grain*, or *different to* for *different from*.

[2] In connection with this paragraph, look at *College Readings*, pp. 1–2 and 14–16.

Force, and Ease, it will be convenient to consider the choice of words with reference to these three qualities.

181. Clearness. — To be clear, a word must not merely be capable of meaning what we wish it to mean: it must be incapable — in the context — of meaning anything else; and it must carry its meaning not merely to the writer, but to the reader. Some years ago a Boston newspaper printed this remarkable statement: "Yesterday at Revere Beach, Lynn, three ice-cream freezers were arrested for fighting. All were intoxicated." The person who wrote this probably saw no reason why a person engaged in freezing ice-cream should not be called an ice-cream freezer. But at least one of his readers joyfully interpreted the term in another sense.

Certain offenses against clearness may be called "absurdities." Among these are the misuse of *each* in such sentences as "Each outdid the other in generosity," the omission of *other* in such a sentence as "Columbia is larger than any American university," and the plausible but meaningless statement that "between each house was a small garden." Then there is the common fault of trying to compare the incomparable: "He showed how impossible it was." Of course he did no such thing: he showed how difficult it was, or perhaps he showed that it was impossible. Nothing can prevent such mistakes except a determination to say just what one means.

182. Force. — The concrete is usually preferable to the abstract. If your writing seems to drag, see if you have not used too many abstract nouns. Often they are necessary; but oftener they are not, and they have a habit of travelling about with colorless verbs. "There was an

increase in the population" is a sluggish way of saying "The population increased."

183. Connotation as well as denotation must be considered. Denotation is the actual meaning of a word; connotation is the suggestion that it carries. *Violin* and *fiddle* have pretty much the same denotation; in connotation they differ utterly. So do *mix* and *mingle*, *jewels* and *jewelry*, *percentage* and *part*, *careless* and *secure*, *interminable* and *endless*, *soldier* and *warrior*, *sailor* and *mariner*, *horse* and *steed*. "Mercury," said one young writer, "resents Juno's activity in his *district*, the ocean, and restores the wrecked ships." We must know more than the actual meaning of words if we are to use them effectively.

184. Vagueness.[1] — We must avoid vague words. In our discussion of definition (§ 25) we saw that to define a thing it is necessary to say of it not merely that which is true but that which is true of no other thing. The ineffectiveness of vague words consists not in the fact that they say of a thing that which is not true of it, but that what they say is also true of many other and wholly different things. It is for this reason that there is no specific force in *strong*, *weak*, *fast*, *slow*, *large*, *small*, *heavy*, *light*, *dark*, *tall*, *short*, *good*, and *bad*. With these there should be grouped *interesting*, *attractive*, *inviting*, *fascinating*, and *bewildering*, which, in addition to being vague, are highly subjective, for what is attractive to one person may not be attractive to another. Into the interpretation of nearly all words there enters the personal equation, but these subjective adjectives are needlessly indefinite in meaning. Like these are *idea*, *affair*, *case*,

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, 2 ff.

animal, *building*, and other enormously inclusive nouns. Like them, too, are such words as *go*, *walk*, *say*, *look*, *think*, and *work*. How did he go? Did he stride, hobble, scramble, loiter, rush, saunter, or push? So with all vague words: they include a score of specific variations, and in the interests of force we must discard all except the one that is best.[1]

185. Exaggeration. — Force oozes out of our speech and writing whenever we permit ourselves — as we are particularly liable to do in talk — to exaggerate. The boy cried "wolf, wolf" when there was no wolf. The neighbors came running in alarm, but, finding that they had been deceived, they decided that the child did not mean what he said. The consequence, it will be remembered, was that one day the wolf came and carried off the sheep. So when to indicate mild approval or a comfortable experience of some sort we permit ourselves to use such words as *elegant*, *lovely*, *fine*, *grand*, *gorgeous*, *wonderful*, *marvelous*, *perfect*, *beautiful*, or *splendid*,[2] we may at first impress those who think that we mean what we say. Finding that we do not, they cease to take us seriously, and therefore when something happens that is really splendid, it turns out that the force has all gone out of that word. If elegance is really involved, let us say *elegant*, and if splendor is really involved, let us say *splendid;* otherwise, let us hold these powerful words in reserve until something really big calls them out. The same is the case when we wish to indicate disapproval or discomfort. A cinder in the eye is annoying, certainly;

[1] Cf. *College Readings*, p. 627 (note on Stevenson's "Apology for Idlers").

[2] Cf. *College Readings*, 559–560.

but it is not hideous, awful, terrible, horrid, abominable, excruciating, ghastly, or infernal. We must learn to like things without loving, adoring, or worshiping them, and to dislike them without hating, detesting, loathing, or abominating them.

All this amounts to saying that we must trust more in the force of restraint. We must ask if the right adjective in the positive degree is not better than the wrong one in the superlative. We must make superlatives give an account of themselves. We must strike out the *very*'s and *absolutely*'s and *supremely*'s and *completely*'s. We must remember that, whimsical exaggeration aside,[1] it is best to depend not on bluster, but on the quiet force of such diction as Webster's when he said of Dartmouth, "It is a small college, sir, and yet there are those who love it."

186. Imitation Jewelry. — Misguided persons who feel that the homely facts of life are inelegant, try to disguise these facts by tawdry diction. *Man* and *woman* seem to these people too humble: they prefer *gentleman* and *lady*. To "work" seems to them less dignified than to "engage in commercial pursuits" or to "accept a responsible position." It is not to be expected that such people should "get up" and "go to bed": they "rise," often from their "downy couch," and at the end of the day they "retire" or perhaps permit themselves to "sink into the arms of Morpheus." Instead of eating their meals they "satisfy the inner man" by "partaking of," or "doing full justice to," or even "discussing" either "tempting viands," "dainty refreshments," or some-

[1] Like Johnson "swallowing his tea in oceans" (Macaulay) and Tennyson smoking "infinite tobacco" (Carlyle).

times "bountiful repasts." No wonder that after all this "the table groans"!

187. **Triteness** must be avoided. It is a pity that, having thought of a good phrase, we find that we must throw it away because too many people have thought of it before us; but so it must be. Words, if they are the right words, may be used singly for century after century without being worn out. "If he ask for *bread*, will ye give him a *stone?*" There is no reason why other words for these things should ever be needed. But when words gather into clusters, particularly if there is the slightest suggestion of pretentiousness or silliness about the expression, they soon become as tiresome as a tune that is played on every street piano. It accordingly becomes necessary to know whether the expressions that we propose to use have been already spoiled. Let us note a few that have been nearly or quite spoiled:

Academic: "obvious," "distinctly," "convincing," "worth while," "institution," "seat of learning," "student body," "instructional force," "interesting."

Critical: "in the last analysis," "grips the reader," "cannot fail to impress."

Epistolary: "Thanking you in advance," "hoping you are the same."

Journalistic: "Managed to reply in a few well-chosen words," "sustained severe bruises about the head," "city fathers," "chief executive," "representative of the press," "beloved and respected by all who knew him," "a power for good in the community."

Oratorical: "We are standing to-day," "each one of us here," "seldom equalled and never surpassed," "it has been well said."

Narrative: "an enjoyable time," "tired but happy," "sadder and wiser," "poor but honest," "more forcible than polite," "no sooner said than done," "in less time than it takes to tell it," "suiting the action to the words," "blissfully ignorant," "with feverish haste," "blinding flash," "a goodly number," "at one fell swoop," "put in an appearance," "took his departure."

Descriptive: "gave the finishing touch to the picture," "reigned supreme," "not a sound broke the stillness," "the devouring element," "silhouetted against the sky," "severely simple," "more easily imagined than described," "stretched away in the distance."

General: "mental picture," "worthy of a better cause," "last but not least," "filled a long felt want," "order out of chaos," "in touch with," "along this line."

Trite Comparisons. — Similarly ineffective are comparisons that have been too often made. Some of them were originally effective; some of them were never really good. So we must avoid

eyes bright as stars	stiff as a poker
busy as a bee	brave as a lion
red as fire	cold as ice
white as snow	hot as fire
white as a sheet	hard as a rock
good as gold	quick as a flash
heavy as lead	quick as lightning
dark as Egypt	clear as crystal
dark as a pocket	ran like a deer
straight as a string	stood like a sentinel
straight as an arrow	wound like a silver ribbon

188. Figures of Speech. — Figures of speech, if they are appropriate, are indispensable aids to vividness; if

they are not aptly used, they are ineffective, and often ludicrous. Of the most frequent, the simile and the metaphor, the second is the bolder and generally the more vivid. The principle of the simile and the metaphor is simply that of illustrating the unknown by means of the known. The illustration will be successful in proportion to the appropriateness of the comparison and the familiarity of the illustration. The effect of figures of speech is sometimes to call up the wrong picture. Only the other day a man said he thought that the expression "to put a spoke in his wheel" meant "to help." Why not? If my neighbor's wheel lacks a spoke and I supply the spoke, do I not help him? Yes; but if my neighbor is riding a bicycle and I shove a stick through the revolving wheel, I do not help him at all; and it is this latter picture, or something akin to it, that the expression is intended to call up.

The great point about figures of speech is that we must mean them. If we do, we shall not apologize for them and we shall not be likely to mix them. We apologize for them when we qualify them by such phrases as "so to speak" or "as it were." We mix them when in one part of the figure we call up an image which conflicts with that in another part. This is done in the following cases:

Boswell is often described as hanging to Johnson's coat-tails, pencil and notebook in hand.

My idea of a sub-plot is that it is a sort of additional link that might be left out.

Gradually warming up in an ascending pitch, Defoe attacks everything he meets.

Poe was vested with a spark of genius.

Franklin was one of those who rent asunder the veil of bigotry that had stopped the pulse of civilization.

His mind floats away on a side-track, and he does not hear the lecture.

I realize that if I have any ambition to go to a university I shall have to plow my way through on my own shoulders.

Blinded by his thirst for revenge, Shylock bit off his own nose.

The important point to note is that these writers failed because they did not know what they meant or see what they were saying. The writer of the first of the examples above did not really mean that Boswell clung to Johnson's coat-tails: he merely meant that he attended him closely; consequently, he saw no absurdity in saying that he had his pencil and his notebook in his hand.

Emerson said of Carlyle that he had the devouring eye and the portraying hand. A person who has these will delight to use figures of speech and will not be liable to confuse them. To use them well is such a pleasure and such an embellishment to style that no one should deny himself the enjoyment of experimenting with them. When Stevenson spoke of windmills making "bread all day long with uncouth gesticulations," when Emerson told us that we must hitch our wagon to a star, when Kipling said of an express train that it laid "the miles over [its] shoulder like a man peeling a shaving from a soft board," the results were better than they could possibly have been by the literal use of any word, however excellent.

189. Elegance. — The "rough diamond" appears in the world of style as in the world of people: just as a person may be clear-headed and vigorous, yet crude, so style may be clear and forcible, but inelegant. Such a

style, like such a person, is so good that it deserves to be made better. To make it better there is no more useful device than constantly to remember that words are meant to be sounded and not merely to be looked at.[1] Read your work aloud, therefore, and all the faults mentioned in this chapter will be more likely to reveal themselves for your correction.

The person who wrote that " the fight at its height was a most exciting sight " put down words with regard to their meaning only; he forgot that his readers had ears. With the question of sound in mind, study the following sentences:

It was an ex*tensive* expos*ition* of the trans*ition* from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.

They decided to *levy heavy* taxes upon America.

The merit of the book is shown *in* the *in*teres*ting* manner *in* which these *in*cidents are *in*terpreted.

His laugh jars on one's ear after seven score years.

Usually early reports are received.

It was printed for purely political purposes.

It was a typical topical outline.

Besides avoiding such alliteration, jingle, and harshness as these sentences reveal, we must be on our guard against the opposite fault, — a tendency toward studied cadences in which sound appears to have been considered more than sense.

We must also shun the bony style which results when structure becomes obtrusive, as it does if I say, " A good style should have the following qualities: first, clearness;

[1] Cf. Stevenson, "On Some Technical Elements of Style." (See the note in *College Readings*, 626–627.)

second, force; and third, elegance." Too frequent use of such connectives as *now*, *hence*, *then*, or *accordingly*, as well as of numerical devices for guiding the reader, may make the path clear at the expense of smoothness.

Equally inelegant are such compounds as *research work*, *mind training*, *student body*, *viewpoint*, *sentence unity*, and a host of other ugly expressions in which a noun is made to do the work of an adjective. A little care will usually discover a substitute which conveys the same meaning and is more agreeable to the ear.

It need hardly be said that elegance disappears whenever slang [1] or vulgarisms [2] are admitted.

No less important is variety in the length and pattern of the sentences, and in the arrangement of words. Many a page which seems unaccountably tiresome will turn out — if read aloud critically — to have one adjective paired with every noun, or perhaps two adjectives, or too many sets of three (three phrases, three nouns, three verbs, or three clauses), or too many long sentences beginning with the subject, or too many short sentences, or too many compound sentences. If that is the case, the pattern must be deliberately varied.[3]

[1] Like "diner" for "dining car," "phone" for "telephone," "take stock in" for "believe," "deal" for "transaction," "posted" for "informed," and "proposition" for "task."

[2] Like "meaty," "brainy," and "tasty."

[3] See §§ 165–170.

CHAPTER IX

IMPROPRIETIES

190. Definition. — In rhetoric an impropriety has no reference to that which is, in a moral or social sense, "improper"; it means the use of a word in a sense which is not the English sense; that is, the use of a word in a sense which is not *its own*.[1] The study of improprieties, then, is the study of accurate usage, as it is recorded in the best dictionaries and exemplified by the best writers.

Use of the Dictionary. — Whoever wishes to write or speak with accuracy and range must learn to make use of the dictionary. He must, furthermore, use it with the idea, not of learning to spell, pronounce, or use the word correctly on the immediate occasion only, but with the idea of fixing something permanently in his mind. It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of the rule that we must not copy from the dictionary, but must, by the use of the dictionary, get information into our minds and, wherever possible, not only remember that something is so, but learn why it is so, in order that we may group many cases under a few general principles. In using the dictionary one must, first of all, master the signs and abbreviations that are necessary to secure the requisite compactness. Among these are the abbreviations for Latin, Greek, French, and the other languages,

[1] From the Latin *proprius* (one's own).

from which English words come, the symbols or abbreviations which indicate that a word is obsolete, archaic, or colloquial, and the marks which indicate the quantity and quality of the letters as they are pronounced.[1] Having learned these abbreviations thoroughly, one should practice getting from the dictionary the spelling, pronunciation, and division into syllables of the word, its derivation, its present meaning (which will often be found entirely different from its earlier meaning), and its synonyms.

But the dictionary, in turn, gets its authority from the actual usage of the writers and speakers who are best qualified to serve as the standard of usage for their country and their period. Accordingly, when we read the works of good writers, and when we hear good speakers, we should be alert to notice their choice of words.

Violations of usage, or accepted fashion, as it may be called, in the use of words come from one or more of the following sources:

(1) Many words are confused with other words on account of the similarity in sound: thus, *principal* and *principle*, *accept* and *except*, *lose* and *loose*, are not easy to spell, pronounce, or use in the proper way.

(2) Similar confusion comes from similarity in spelling, and is often mingled with the preceding kind of diffi-

[1] In this book the authority of the latest edition of Webster is accepted, and pronunciation is indicated by the signs which are used in Webster and which, in both the New International Dictionary and the Secondary School Dictionary, are found at the bottom of each page. These marks for the vowels are as follows: āle, senāte, câre, ăm, ăccount, ärm, åsk, sofà; ēve, ẽvent, ĕnd, recĕnt, makẽr; īce, ĭll; ōld, ọ̄bey, ôrb, ŏdd, sŏft, cŏnnect; ūse, ŭnite, ûrn, ŭp, circŭs, menü; fo͞od, fo͝ot; out, oil.

culty, as is the case in the three pairs of words mentioned above.

(3) Many words, though they neither look nor sound alike, indicate very similar objects or ideas. In this case, ignorance of the precise difference between the things signified causes us to misuse the words, as is the case with *majority* and *plurality*, or *refer* and *allude*.

191. A List of Common Improprieties.

A.D. stands for *anno Domini*, which means *in the year of our Lord*. Therefore, do not use A.D. unless the English equivalent would make sense.

Incorrect: The fourth century A.D.

Correct: The fourth century after Christ.

Correct: A.D. 46.

Accept should be distinguished from *except*.

Acceptance means the act of accepting; *acceptation* indicates the meaning in which a word is accepted or received. Thus, we speak of the *acceptance* of an invitation, but of a word as used in its general *acceptation*.

Access should not be confused with *accession*.

Admire should not be used for *like*.

Incorrect: I should admire to go.

Affect (verb) and *effect* (noun or verb) should be distinguished. To *affect* is to produce an *effect*, or result, upon. To *effect* is to bring about.

Aggravate means not to anger, but to make more serious.

Incorrect: I was aggravated at his slowness.

Correct: I was annoyed at his slowness.

Correct: His illness was aggravated by carelessness.

Agreeable for *willing* (I am agreeable if you are) is colloquial and often ambiguous.

Allude, mention, refer. Look up these words in the dictionary.

Allusion, illusion.

Almost, most. *Most* is now considered colloquial for *almost.* When used as an adverb, *most* means *to the greatest extent.*

Objectionable: I was most dead when I got there.

Correct: I was almost dead when I got there.

Better: I was very tired when I got there.

Alternative applies to two possibiiities only.

Incorrect: The third alternative is to reply.

Correct: The third possibility is to reply.

Correct: The alternative is to go.

Among, between. *Among* implies more than two persons or objects; *between* implies only two.

Incorrect: I divided it among the two children.

Anyplace, everyplace, noplace, and *someplace* (whether used as one word or two words) are vulgarisms when used as adverbs. They are, of course, correct as phrases.

Incorrect: He has gone someplace.

Correct: He has gone somewhere.

Correct: Any place which suits you will do.

A one ("not a one") for *one* is incorrect.

Avocation means secondary occupation; *vocation* means principal occupation.

Badly should never be confused with *very much.*

Incorrect: He wanted to sing badly.

Balance (except in bookkeeping) should not be used for *remainder* or *rest.*

Incorrect: The balance of the afternoon.

Be for *have,* as in "I am finished," "He is done," is incorrect.

Beside means "by the side of"; *besides,* "in addition to."

Between. See *among.*

Blame on, blame, or *blame for.*

Incorrect: Do not blame it on me.

Correct: Do not blame me.

Correct: Do not blame me for it.

Boughten is a homely substitute for *bought* or *purchased.*

Bound is colloquial for *determined*. A strong reason for not using it is that in such a sentence as "He is bound to testify," we cannot tell whether the meaning is "under obligations" (which would be correct) or "determined" (which would be colloquial).

Calculate, guess, believe, and *reckon* are none of them quite synonymous with *think*. See dictionary.

Can't seem to for *seem unable to* is colloquial and inexact.

Chiefly, largely. See *largely.*

Claim means to *demand* or to *assert ownership of*, not to *assert, urge, argue,* or *affirm.*

Clever for *good-natured* is provincial.

Coincidence, happening. If I fall down and break my leg, that is a *happening;* if my brother and I break our legs on the same day, that is a *coincidence.* See dictionary.

College, school. See dictionary.

Common. See *mutual.*

Complement, compliment. See dictionary.

Conclude, decide.

Incorrect: I concluded to go.

Correct: I decided to go.

Correct: I concluded that he had forgotten to wind the clock.

Contemplate on (by analogy, perhaps, with *meditate on*) is sometimes used for *contemplate.*

Contemptible (deserving contempt), *contemptuous* (showing contempt).

Continual, continuous, constant, incessant, perpetual. See dictionary.

Council (a body of advisers) should be distinguished from *counsel* (advice).

Convince, convict. See dictionary.

Crowd (for *party* or *company*) is often misused. Yet no one would give up Lincoln's "I will not leave this crowd in doubt."

Cunning, though commonly used to indicate the qualities that

make some children interesting, is better reserved for cases where dexterity or artfulness is shown. See dictionary.

Curious, funny, odd, singular, and *strange* should be used with discrimination. See dictionary.

Incorrect: Wasn't it funny that he and his brother should both have appendicitis at the same time?

Custom "suggests the fact of repetition rather than the tendency to repeat"; *habit* "implies a settled disposition or tendency due to repetition" (Webster).

Deal, transaction. See dictionary.

Decide. See *conclude.*

Decided, decisive. See dictionary.

Definite, definitive. See dictionary.

Demean (cf. *demeanor*) is neutral. It is frequently confused with *degrade.*

Incorrect: I would not demean myself by doing such a thing.

Differ with, differ from. People differ *with* or *from* each other in their opinions; things differ *from* each other in their qualities.

Different from is accepted American usage; *different to* is good English usage; *different than* is not allowable.

Discover, invent. See dictionary.

Disinterested indicates absence of partiality; *uninterested,* lack of interest.

Distinct, distinctive. See dictionary.

Donate is a pompous vulgarism for *give.*

Each is often used illogically.

Illogical: They followed each other out of the door. [Whom did the first follow?]

Illogical: They outdid each other in generosity. [If A outdid B, how could B outdo A?]

Each other applies to two only; *one another,* to more than two.

Economic, economical. The former means *having to do with economics* ("Let us consider economic conditions in 1750"); the latter, *frugal* or *inexpensive.*

Either for *any; neither* for *none.*

Wrong: Neither of the three.

Correct: None of the three.

Elegant is often used when no idea of elegance is present. Addison's style is elegant; dropped eggs — no matter how much one may like them — are not.

Emigrate, immigrate. See dictionary.

Enormity, enormousness. Enormity applies only to monstrous evils.

Equally as, for *equally* or *as . . . as,* should not be used.

Incorrect: A is equally as good as B.

Correct: A is as good as B.

Correct: A and B are equally good.

Every so often and *once in so often* are vulgarisms. In general *so* should not be used when no direct comparison is intended.

Every which way is a vulgarism for *every way, various ways,* or *all directions.*

Exceptional means unusual; *exceptionable,* open to objection.

Expect, suppose. See dictionary.

Incorrect: I expect that he is coming.

Correct: I expect him.

Correct: I suppose that he is coming.

Factor, for *reason* or *part,* is much overworked.

Falls (as in Niagara Falls) is a plural.

Incorrect: There is a falls a mile above the village.

Farther indicates actual progress; *further* indicates figurative progress.

Correct: The church is two miles farther on.

Correct: The further you look into the matter the more perplexing it is.

Fewer is used of numbers; *less,* of quantities.

Correct: No fewer than twenty.

Correct: Not less than a gallon.

Fix (verb) for *repair* is colloquial.

Fix (noun) for *plight* is colloquial.

Folks for people in general or for one's relatives is colloquial.

For is misused in the expression "I want for him to go." The correct form is "I want him to go."

Former and *latter* (instead of *first* and *last*) are used when only two persons or things are compared. *Former* and *latter* are used generally in such expressions as "former times," "latter days."

Frighten, a transitive verb, should not be confused with *become frightened.*

Funny means "amusing," not "surprising." See *curious.*

Further. See *farther.*

Get in the expression *get to do* is a provincialism for "find it possible to do," "succeed in doing."

Got (past participle *got*, not *gotten*) is properly used with *have* when the meaning is "have secured"; it is improper when mere possession is to be indicated.

Incorrect: How many dogs have you got?

Correct: At last I have got that book that I have wanted so long.

Grand is improperly used when no idea of grandeur is intended.

Guess is proper only when a problem has to be solved partly by conjecture. See *calculate.*

Incorrect: I guess I'll write a letter.

Correct: He guessed the answer to the riddle.

Habit. See *custom.*

Had ought for *ought* is a vulgarism.

Hanged, hung. See dictionary.

Happening. See *coincidence.*

Hardly and *scarcely* with negatives ("I couldn't hardly believe it") are incorrect.

Have is superfluous in "I *had* a man tell me" (for "A man told me") and "Did you ever *have* a bee sting you?" (for "Were you ever stung by a bee?"). It is correct in "I had a man clean my furnace" if the speaker means that he caused the work to be done.

Healthful, healthy. The former means "conducive to health"; the latter, having health. Oatmeal, therefore, is *healthful*, not *healthy*.

Help (noun) for *servant* is provincial.

Historic, historical. The former means "notable in history"; the latter, "having to do with history."

Home for *at home* ("He is *home*") is incorrect. It is idiomatic after verbs of motion (such as *send* or *bring*).

Hopes should not be used when the idea is not plural.

Incorrect: I was in hopes that you could go.

Correct: The war destroyed all our hopes.

How for *what* or *that* is incorrect.

Incorrect: What time is it, please?
How?

Incorrect: I told him *how* his house was on fire.

Hustle (intransitive) for move (or work) rapidly is colloquial.

Ill (adverb), not *illy*, is the accepted form.

Imaginative, imaginary. See dictionary.

Immigrate, emigrate. See dictionary.

In, into. The former is usually incorrect with verbs of motion.

Incorrect: Come in the house.

In back of, for *behind*, is incorrect. It probably arose by analogy with *in front of*, which is, of course, correct.

Incessant, continual, continuous, constant, perpetual. See dictionary.

Individual, for *person*, should not be used indiscriminately. See dictionary.

Ingenious, ingenuous. See dictionary.

Inside of for *within* (used of time) is crude.

Objectionable: They will probably come inside of an hour.

Invent, discover. See dictionary.

Kind of for *rather* is a colloquialism.

Kind of a for *kind of* ("What kind of a hat do you want?") is objectionable.

Largely, chiefly. See dictionary.

Ambiguous: The meeting was largely attended by upper classmen.

Better: The meeting was attended chiefly by upper classmen. Many upper classmen attended the meeting.

Last, latter. See *former.*

Lay, lie. See dictionary.

Learn, teach. See dictionary.

Leave (verb) for *let* in "leave go of me" and "leave me go" is wrongly used.

Less. See *fewer.*

Liable, likely. The former is used of unpleasant possibilities only; the latter, of any possibility.

Like (verb), when used (without an object) for *be satisfied*, is provincial.

Incorrect: How do they like?

Like (conjunction) is correct before nouns, but not before clauses.

Incorrect: You speak like he does.

Correct: You speak like him.

Correct: You speak as he does.

Like for *as if* (You look like you were tired) is incorrect.

Likely (adverb) for *probably*, though admitted by the dictionaries, is not in good use except when preceded by such a word as *more, quite, most,* or *very.* Even then it is somewhat colloquial.

Objectionable: We shall likely go.

Likely (adj.) for *promising* is archaic or provincial. Lowell used it effectively when he made Hosea Biglow speak of the

"Three likely lads ez wal could be,
Haynsome an' brave an' not tu knowin'."

Locate for "fix one's residence" or "settle," and *be located* for "dwell" are both objectionable.

Incorrect: We decided to locate in Colorado.

Incorrect: Where are you located now?

Loose (verb) for *lose* is wholly wrong, yet very common.

Lose out for *lose* is objectionable.

Mad, angry. See dictionary.

Majority, plurality. See dictionary.

Masterful, masterly. Both indicate command: the first suggests a somewhat overbearing use of authority; the second merely suggests superior knowledge or skill.

Mean for *unkind* is inaccurate. See dictionary.

In our midst for *in the midst of us* or *among us* is not in good use.

Most (adverb) for *almost* or *nearly* is colloquial.

Most should be sparingly used when no real superlative is intended. In such cases *very* is usually strong enough.

Ineffective: Most fascinating, most excellent, most fatiguing, most extraordinary.

Mutual, common. The first implies reciprocity. If A is useful to B, and B to A, then A and B are *mutually* useful. If A and B are both interested in C, then C is their *common* interest. The expression "a mutual friend" is therefore incorrect.

Near and *nearly* should not be confused.

Incorrect: I came nearly forgetting to tell you.

Correct: I came near forgetting to tell you.

Correct: I nearly forgot to tell you.

No sooner . . . when ("No sooner did the whistle blow *when* all the workmen stopped") for *no sooner . . . than* is incorrect.

Nor and *or* should be carefully distinguished. *Either . . . or* and *neither . . . nor* are sets which must not be broken.

Nowhere near ("There were *nowhere near* fifty people in the room") for *not nearly* is incorrect.

Correct: We are nowhere near our destination yet.

O!, Oh! See dictionary.

Observance, observation. See dictionary.

Odd, curious, funny, strange. See dictionary.

Off of ("He took it *off of* the table") for *off* is incorrect.

Oftentimes for *often* is incorrect.

One another. See *each other.*

Onto ("He threw it *onto* the ground") for *upon* is not in good use. *On to* ("Let us go on to the next word") is, of course, correct.

Oral, verbal. See dictionary. Notice derivation. We speak of an *oral* (as distinguished from a *written*) examination, and of *verbal* changes in a composition (as distinguished from changes in the ideas).

Out loud for *aloud* ("He spoke right out loud") is incorrect. "He spoke out loudly" is correct, but has a different meaning.

Over with, through with ("The practice was over with at last"): Better say *over, done, finished,* or *ended.*

Overly for *over, too,* or *very* ("not overly careful") is incorrect.

Party, person. See dictionary.

Per (Lat., through, by) is correct only when a Latin noun completes the phrase.

Incorrect: Per year.

Correct: Per annum.

Correct: Annually, each year, a year.

Per cent, percentage. See dictionary.

Perpetual, continual, continuous, constant, incessant. See dictionary.

-place for *where* (anyplace, someplace) is incorrect. The expressions *any place, some place* ("Any place that suits you will do") are correct.

Plan on ("plan on going") for *plan to* is colloquial.

Plenty (adverb) as in "These nails are *plenty* large enough" is colloquial and superfluous.

Plurality, majority. See dictionary.

Posted for *informed* ("He is well posted on European politics") is colloquial.

Practical, practicable. See dictionary.

Prefer . . . than.

Incorrect: Do you prefer to go than to stay?

Correct: Do you prefer to go or to stay?

Correct (but redundant): Do you prefer to go rather than to stay?

Preventive is decidedly preferable to *preventative*, which Webster terms "an unnecessary and irregularly formed doublet of *preventive*."

Proposition for *task* or *matter* ("To read *Paradise Lost* is a hard proposition") is slang.

Proved (past participle) is preferable to *proven*, though Scots law still keeps its "not proven."

Provided (conj.) means "if"; *providing* is a participle or gerund.

Incorrect: I will call for you, providing it does not rain.

Put in (verb) for *spend* is colloquial.

Put in an appearance for *appeared* is colloquial.

Quite means "really," "entirely," but not "rather," "somewhat."

Raise (transitive) and *rise* (intransitive) should not be confused. See dictionary.

Rarely (or *seldom*) *ever*, for *rarely*, *hardly ever*, or *seldom*, is incorrect.

Reckon. See dictionary.

Remember of for *remember* is incorrect.

Relations, relatives. See dictionary.

Ambiguous: My relations are doubtful.

Rig for *vehicle*, or for *costume*, is incorrect.

Same for *in the same way* ("Do this the same as I did") is incorrect.

Same for *it* or *them* is objectionable. ("He received a cornet on his birthday, and has been playing on the same ever since.")

Say with the infinitive ("He said to take a North Avenue car.") is incorrect.

Scarcely. See *hardly*.

School, college. See dictionary.

Seldom ever. See *rarely*.

Set, sit. See dictionary.

Settle for *pay* ("I will settle the first of the month") is colloquial.

Shape (noun) for *condition* is colloquial.

Show or *show up* for *be present* is colloquial.

Show up for *expose* is colloquial.

Show for *chance* ("There is no show for me") is colloquial.

Sight for *great quantity* is colloquial.

Significance, signification. See dictionary.

Singular, curious, funny, odd, strange. See dictionary.

Sized as used in "A large sized rope is necessary" is incorrect.

Size up for *judge* is incorrect.

So for *very* ("So good of you to come") is rather colloquial.

Some for *a real* ("This is some dinner") is very colloquial.

Start in for *begin* is colloquial.

State (verb) for *say* ("I wish to state that I disapprove") is incorrect. It is correct ("I wish to state my reasons for disapproving the suggestion") when the meaning is *to set forth in detail.*

Story for *falsehood* is colloquial.

Story for any written report, whether narrative or not, is newspaper slang.

Stop (verb) for *stay* is colloquial. See dictionary.

Strange, curious, funny, odd, singular. See dictionary.

Subtle, subtile. See dictionary.

Suppose. See *expect.*

Swell (noun) for a fashionable person, and *swell* (adj.) for *fashionable,* are both colloquial.

Take in for *attend* is colloquial.

Teach, learn. See dictionary.

Team is incorrectly applied to a vehicle ("horse and team"). It means two or more animals, either alone or with a vehicle.

That for *so* ("I had no idea it was that bad") is colloquial.

That is (abbreviated form, *i.e.*) should not be used for "at least" or "for example."

Incorrect: In the eighteenth century, *i.e.* in the early part of the century, it was customary. (Here a better expression would be "at least".)

Incorrect: Many Romantic poets — *i.e.* Scott and Coleridge — were read. (Here a better phrase would be "for example.")

Transaction, deal. See dictionary.

Transpire means "to become known"; it is frequently confused with *occur.*

Correct: The event occurred in 1840; the cause, however, did not transpire for many years.

Uninterested. See *disinterested.*

Verbal. See *oral.*

Viewpoint. Point of view is better.

Vocation. See *avocation.*

Ways for *way* or *distance* ("a long ways from home") is incorrect.

When for *that* ("It was in 1904 when I first saw him") is incorrect.

Where . . . to for *where* ("Where did they go to?") is incorrect.

While is often loosely used, and can frequently be omitted to advantage.

Objectionable: George Eliot wrote novels, while Shakespeare wrote plays.

Better: George Eliot wrote novels; Shakespeare wrote plays.

Whose, like *who,* should generally be restricted to persons; it is permissible to use it of inanimate things only if "of which" would be too awkward.

Objectionable: A tree whose bark . . .

Better: A tree the bark of which . . .

Wire (verb) for *telegraph,* and *wire* (noun) for *telegram,* are colloquial.

Without for *unless* is incorrect.

Wrong: I shall not go without you do.

Correct: I shall not go unless you do.

Correct: I shall not go without you.

Write up (noun) for *report, account,* and *write up* (verb) for *write* are slangy.

CHAPTER X

NUMBER OF WORDS

192. It is a difficult problem to use enough words to satisfy the requirements of clearness and of elegance without using so many words as to injure force. Such repetition as is not essential to clearness should be avoided. On this point Lord Bryce's procedure is the one that we should all adopt:

> This plan involves some repetition. But an author who finds himself obliged to choose between repetition and obscurity ought not to doubt as to his choice. Whenever it has been necessary to trace a phenomenon to its source, or to explain a connection between several phenomena, I have not hesitated, knowing that one must not expect a reader to carry in his mind all that has been told already, to restate a material fact, or reënforce a view which gives to the facts what I conceive to be their true significance.

193. Have enough to say; in fact, have too much rather than too little. If, out of material ample for a composition of fifteen hundred words, you are trying to write a composition of a thousand words, you will throughout the process be trying, both consciously and unconsciously, to be concise.

194. Mean everything you say: "One word with blood in't's twice ez good ez two."

195. Remember that the greater includes the less.

Redundant: The improvement was decided and real.

196. Avoid redundant compounds: "source material" means no more than "sources," "research work" than "research," or "the English 1 course" than "English 1."

197. Avoid the kind of redundancy that comes from talking about what you are doing instead of doing it.

Redundant: In this theme I propose to discuss the relation of the forests to the water supply, which is, in my opinion, a matter of great importance.

198. Be particularly careful not to be always saying parenthetically "I think." It is assumed that you think.

199. Avoid needless additions to your verbs.

descend down	for	descend
explain about	for	explain
join together	for	join
connect up	for	connect
meet up	for	meet
own up	for	own, acknowledge, admit
win out	for	win
lose out	for	lose
try out	for	try
start off, start in, start out	for	start
end up	for	end
eat up	for	eat
use up	for	use
hitch up	for	hitch

Undoubtedly there are cases where the use of *up*, as in *eat up* for *eat*, gives an idea of additional thoroughness, but often it is superfluous.

200. Be careful not to use a word of classical origin followed by a word of Germanic origin which repeats the idea. This rule has been disregarded in such expressions as "universally popular with all the people," "mutually fond of each other," "a panacea for all ills," and "a bibliography of books."

201. Avoid such stereotyped redundant expressions as "each and every," "rules and regulations," "goods and chattels," "manners and customs," "any way, shape, or manner," "various and sundry," "good and sufficient," "ways and means," "this day and generation," and "one and the same."

202. Do not turn an idea over and tell us what is on the other side of it, if it is perfectly possible to see the back of the idea from the front. To say that the trouble was "internal rather than external," or that something is "the rule and not the exception," is too much like saying that a person is "dead rather than alive."

203. Be careful not to use a very general adjective which includes the adjective that follows it. For example, take the sentence, "It was a clear, satisfactory account." One of the qualities that made the account satisfactory was its clearness. *Satisfactory*, in other words, is not the name for that portion of the pie that is left after the piece called *clearness* has been cut out: it is the name for the whole pie. We may say "clear and otherwise satisfactory"; but "otherwise satisfactory" is vague. It would be much better to cut up the rest of the pie into pieces, as we have done in taking out the piece which we

have called *clear*. This mistake is very frequently made in expressions beginning with the adjective *good*, or some equally meaningless word, such as "good big piece," "good long walk," "good practical methods," and "nice clear day"; but it appears elsewhere, as in the phrase "an education that is broad, adequate, and thorough."

204. Reject the temptation to clog the sentence by parentheses and qualifications.

Redundant: The hunter, guided — as he was — by his dog, soon reached the spot.

Redundant: Addison's presentations of moral truths, on the whole, are given in a pleasant and yet at the same time forcible manner.

Be on the lookout for chances to reduce clauses to phrases and phrases to single words. A sentence of twenty words which has three or four clauses seems longer than one of the same length but of simpler grammatical construction.

Redundant: The methods which they use.

Better: Their methods.

Redundant: One of the bravest things which the *Spectator* did was the attack which it made upon duelling.

Better: One of the bravest things which the *Spectator* did was to attack duelling.

205. Do not hesitate to repeat where either sound or sense makes repetition desirable. We are glad that Hazlitt wrote of Coleridge, "He talked on forever, and you wished him to talk on forever," rather than "He talked on forever, and you wished him to."

EXERCISES

(Covering Chapters VIII, IX, and X)

1. Improve the following sentences:

a. I will call him up on the phone.

b. The prof dismissed the class.

c. That is the most unique idea I ever heard of.

d. The king graciously mixed with the guests.

e. I like him better than any of my friends.

f. Semicolons and colons were often used interchangeably, and in many instances in a sense in which commas should have been used.

g. He had certain peculiar idiosyncrasies of his own.

h. In the front of the room is a reference library containing books to be used for reading in connection with the course.

i. As regards the results by which the Senate has become eminent and successful, there are several causes.

j. But if one cannot write shorthand it is impracticable as far as he is concerned.

k. The comma seems especially troublesome: some omit it; others use too many of them.

l. A nice bright morning appeared when I looked out of my window this morning.

m. Good lecture courses are, of course, usually duly appreciated.

2. Break up each of the following general words into as many specific words as possible: go, climb, say, work (verb), eat, misfortune, success, difficult, oppose, help, room, soft, hard.

3. (*a*) Always — never. Between these two words arrange (in their proper order) all the words you can think of to express different degrees of frequency and infrequency. Treat similarly

(*b*) loved — hated

(*c*) sped — stood still

(*d*) enormous — minute

(*e*) abominable — admirable

4. Summarize some short story or narrative poem, or some portion of a novel, from the point of view of one of the characters. Adapt your choice of words to the character.

5. Condense the following sentences:

(*a*) There is very little which is alike in the two books.

(*b*) After the climax has been reached the interest of the story flags decidedly.

(*c*) In spite of all the efforts which he made his opponent drew ahead steadily.

(*d*) His omniscient knowledge of everything was remarkable.

(*e*) Your overcoat is a good long one; mine is rather worn out.

6. Reduce each of the following paragraphs to a telegram of twenty words:

(*a*) The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the Hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a mob. D— rushed to a casement, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a facsimile (so far as regards externals), which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings — imitating the D— cipher, very readily, by means of a seal formed of bread.

(*b*) We now worked in earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more intense excitement. During this interval we had fairly unearthed an oblong chest of wood, which, from its perfect preservation and wonderful hardness, had plainly been subjected to some mineralizing process — perhaps that of the bichloride of mercury. This box was three feet and a half long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep. It was firmly secured by bands of wrought iron, riveted, and forming a kind of trelliswork over the whole. On each side of the chest,

near the top, were three rings of iron — six in all — by means of which a firm hold could be obtained by six persons. Our utmost united endeavors served only to disturb the coffer very slightly in its bed. We at once saw the impossibility of removing so great a weight. Luckily, the sole fastenings of the lid consisted of two sliding bolts. These we drew back — trembling and panting with anxiety. In an instant, a treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before us. As the rays of the lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upwards, from a confused heap of gold and of jewels, a glow and a glare that absolutely dazzled our eyes.

7. Strike out all unnecessary words in the following passage. As it stands it contains 204 words; count the number in your revised version.

Among the most famous and justly celebrated of our American writers of the nineteenth century is James Russell Lowell, the poet, who was born in Cambridge where his father lived in a fine old colonial house. James was a great reader, expressing when very young a characteristically enthusiastic and boyish desire to read all of the Greek and Latin classics that his favorite poet Milton had been known to have read. This was when Lowell was only about seventeen years of age. Although he probably had to give up this very daring and ambitious plan for reading so much, yet we know that he did nevertheless manage to read a great deal more than most men are able to do, being equally at home in English, French, and Italian literature and having a sympathetic knowledge if not a very profound acquaintance with most if not all of the best of the great European writers of his own and earlier times. Besides this vast and extensive knowledge of the great world of books, Lowell was also acquainted with what some people might perhaps be inclined to call the more actual world of affairs. He was ambassador to England and was very successful as a diplomat.

8. Correct the mixed figures in the sentences on pp. 294–295.

9. Examine the use of figures in *College Readings*, pp. 130 ff., 137 ff., 352 ff., and 361 ff.

10. Write sentences illustrating the correct use of the following words:

claim (verb)	hopes
exceptionable	liable
alternative	mutual
complement	state (verb)
demean	mad
economic	individual (noun)
healthful	masterful
aggravate	practicable
majority	elegant
plurality	avocation

11. Correct the following sentences:

(*a*) Since you fixed my bicycle it goes first-rate.

(*b*) How did he affect his purpose?

(*c*) When did he conclude to go?

(*d*) He was continuously inviting me to visit him.

(*e*) The judge, I am glad to say, was entirely uninterested.

(*f*) The enormity of the distance taxes the imagination.

(*g*) The event transpired two years after the access of George III.

(*h*) This is certainly not the usual acceptance of the word.

(*i*) His house is further on, I guess.

(*k*) I was pretty near exhausted; in fact, I have rarely ever been as tired. Fortunately, it was soon over with.

12. Note the rhythm of the sentences in Ruskin's description of St. Mark's (*College Readings*, 383 ff.).

Part V

MECHANICS

CHAPTER XI

GRAMMAR

VERBS AND THEIR SUBJECTS AND OBJECTS

206. A verb agrees with its subject in person and in number. When a plural noun comes between a singular subject and the verb, or a singular noun comes between a plural subject and the verb, the verb agrees with the subject, not with the nearer noun.

Wrong: The nature of the advertisements indicate the class of people by whom the paper is read.

Correct: The nature of the advertisements indicates the class of people by whom the paper is read. [Though grammatical, this sentence is not smooth: "advertisements indicates" is harsh and should be avoided by a rearrangement of the sentence.]

Wrong: You was; it don't.

Correct: You were; it doesn't.

207. Such expressions as *each*, *each one*, *every one*, *no one*, *one*, *a person*, *some one*, *somebody*, *everybody*, *nobody*, and *any one* take a singular verb and are referred to by a singular pronoun.

Correct: *Each* person in the class *was* asked to contribute something.

Correct: *Each* contributed to the extent of *his* resources.

208. A singular verb is required when a singular subject is modified by a phrase beginning with *in addition to*, *as well as*, *along with*, *with*, or *together with*.

Correct: The president, together with the secretary, *was* at the dinner.

209. The title of a book, play, opera, or the like takes a verb in the singular and is referred to by a pronoun in the singular.

Incorrect: *The Adventures of Timothy* are one of my favorite books.

Incorrect: I have just finished *The Heavenly Twins*, and I like them very much.

210. Sometimes the subject of a verb seems to be its object.

Wrong: My cousin, whom I thought could not come, managed to be there. [The meaning is not "whom I thought," but "who, I thought, could not come." This particular difficulty usually occurs with verbs of saying, believing, thinking, supposing, and the like, which are parenthetical and do not affect the main construction. Compare this construction with the rule for the subject of an infinitive (§ 213) and carefully notice the difference.]

211. The object of a verb or a preposition is in the objective case.

Correct: Between you and me.

212. In the case of many nouns of foreign origin, the singular and the plural should be carefully distinguished, in order that the correct verb may be used. Such nouns are:

Singular	*Plural*
axis	axes
crisis	crises
thesis	theses
fungus	fungi
stratum	strata
phenomenon	phenomena
addendum	addenda
cherub	cherubim
seraph	seraphim
datum	data
genus	genera
index	indexes or indices
alumnus (masc.)	alumni (masc.)
alumna (fem.)	alumnæ (fem.)

Correct: The data were sufficient.

Correct: Both sisters were alumnæ.

213. The subject of an infinitive is in the objective case.

Correct: I believe him to be honest. (Compare with Section 210, and carefully notice the difference between the two constructions.)

214. The predicate substantive which completes the infinitive should be in the objective case.

Correct: I believe the writer to be him.

ARTICLES AND PRONOUNS

215. The pronouns *myself*, *himself*, *herself*, and the like, are either reflexive ("He hurt himself") or intensive ("If you want a thing well done, you must do it yourself").

If neither of these meanings is intended, the pronouns ending in *self* should not be used.

Incorrect: George, his brother, and myself had planned to go together.
Correct: George, his brother, and I had planned to go together.

216. *This* (plural *these*) and *that* (plural *those*) must agree with the nouns which they modify.

Incorrect: These kind of people.
Correct: This kind of people.

THE POSSESSIVE CASE

217. The possessive case is required before the gerund.

Correct: I was sorry to hear of John's going so soon.
Correct: There is no doubt of his going.

218. A distinction should be made between the English possessive case and the Latin genitive case. The Latin genitive indicates ownership, the object of an action, the subject of an action, measure of time, and various other relations. The English possessive case does not represent all of these relations. It represents possession, but should almost never be used to indicate possession when the subject is not a person. Thus, we may say "the mayor's house," but not "the city's mayor." The possessive case hardly ever indicates the object of an action. Thus, we may not say "Belgium's invasion." The English possessive is, however, used to indicate measure of time in such expressions as "day's work," "a moment's delay," "a week's wages," "a minute's

notice," and it is also used in a few idiomatic expressions, such as " for pity's sake."

219. The possessive pronouns (*his, hers, its, ours, yours, theirs*) require no apostrophe. Be particularly careful not to confuse *its* (= of it) with *it's* (= it is).

ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

220. Verbs of *looking, tasting, smelling, feeling, sounding,* and the like, are completed by an adjective if the meaning is that the object *seems to be* of a certain quality. But if the desire is to modify the verb, an adverb is required.

Correct: It tastes sweet. [That is, to the sense of taste it *seems to be* sweet.]
Correct: She sang sweetly.
Correct: These shoes look good. [That is, *seem to be* good shoes.]
Correct: "Look well to your speech."

221. Verbs meaning *to make* (by cutting, rubbing, etc.), like those meaning *seem to be* (see Section 220), are completed by an adjective.

Correct: He planed the board smooth. [That is, by planing he caused the board *to be* smooth.]
Correct: Rub dry; cut short; boil soft.

222. Do not forget that *nicely, poorly,* and *weakly* are adverbs, not adjectives. Do not, therefore, say, " He is poorly." Say rather, " He is ill."

223. Remember that *likely, some, certain, real, sure, first-rate, slow, this,* and *that* are adjectives, not adverbs. Do not, therefore, say, " He will likely go " when you mean " He

will probably go"; or "He is some better" for "He is somewhat better"; or "They were real kind to us" if you mean "very kind."

224. Comparison is impossible with adjectives and adverbs the meaning of which is absolute; for example, *complete, perfect, unique, universal, spotless.* There are degrees of approach to perfection, but not degrees of perfection. We may, therefore, say *more nearly perfect, most nearly perfect,* and *perfect,* but beyond that we cannot go.

225. *Former, latter, less, lesser, greater,* and other comparatives are to be used instead of the corresponding superlatives (*first, last, least, greatest*) when only two persons or things are in question.

Wrong: The last half of the book is the most interesting.
Correct: The latter half of the book is the more interesting.

But these comparatives are sometimes used when no two things are definitely being compared; for example, "in former times."

VERBS

226. Passive Voice. — Use the passive voice sparingly: it is usually more interesting to read that *some one did* a thing than that the thing *was done by somebody.* Be especially careful

1. Not to cause a needless violation of unity by changing the voice in the middle of a sentence.

Bad: He read the first volume in the morning, and the second volume was completed before bedtime.

2. Not to use the passive ordinarily when no agent is indicated.

Weak: A committee was appointed.
Better: The governor appointed a committee.

Sometimes caution leads us to say, "A mistake has apparently been made" when we do not know, or do not wish to tell, who made the mistake; and Francis Parkman, who disliked to talk about himself, wrote a long account of his life, in which he regularly said, "An effort was made" instead of "I made an effort."

227. Shall and Will.[1] — 1. In direct discourse:

(*a*) Use for simple futurity, I *shall*, You *will*, He *will;* We *shall*, You *will*, They *will*.

(*b*) Use for determination, promise, prophecy, command, or threat, I *will*, You *shall*, He *shall;* We *will*, You *shall*, They *shall*.

2. In indirect discourse (that is, in subordinate clauses after verbs of saying, thinking, supposing, and the like):

(*a*) If the main clause and the subordinate clause refer to the same person, use *shall* throughout for futurity, and *will* throughout for determination. Examples: My brother thinks he *shall* enjoy the play. The captain assures me that he *will* try.

(*b*) If the subjects of the clauses do not refer to the same person, use the forms proper for direct discourse. Examples: My brother thinks his roommate *will* enjoy the play. The captain assures me that the lieutenant *shall* be notified.

Should and *would* follow the rules for *shall* and *will*.

[1] For fuller treatment of *shall* and *will*, see Kittredge and Farley's *Advanced English Grammar*, or A. S. Hill's *Beginnings of Rhetoric and Composition*.

228. May and Can. *May* indicates permission; *can* indicates possibility. Thus, "I may go" means "I have permission to go"; or, with a different intonation, it may mean "It is possible that I shall go." "You may go" means "You have my permission to go." "I can go" means "I am able to go."

Wrong: You can go. (If the meaning is "You have my permission to go.")
Correct: You may go.

Might and *could* follow the rules of *may* and *can*.

229. The time of the action in dependent clauses and infinitives depends upon that indicated by the main clause.

Wrong: I wanted to have seen you before you left.
Correct: I wanted to see you before you left.

230. The present tense (sometimes called the "universal present") should usually be employed for general statements which are supposed to be permanently true.

Correct: Benjamin Franklin believed that honesty is the best policy.

231. Do not use the present tense for the future.

Incorrect: I hope it does not rain to-morrow.
Correct: I hope it will not rain to-morrow.

232. Be cautious in using the so-called "historical present" in order to give vividness. Be particularly careful not to jumble together past tenses and historical presents. If you are summarizing the action of a book, you may say, "Hamlet follows the ghost off the stage";

but do not try to secure vividness by saying, "He pauses, he trembles. . . ."

233. Do not allow an adverb or other word to come between the parts of the present or the perfect infinitive.

Incorrect: To publicly acknowledge the mistake.
Correct: Publicly to acknowledge the mistake.
Correct: To acknowledge the mistake publicly.
Incorrect: To have individually thanked them would have been better.
Correct: To have thanked them individually would have been better.

234. The complement of an intransitive verb is put in the nominative case. This rule presents some difficulties in connection with the verb *to be*.

Incorrect: It is me.
Incorrect: It was him that I wanted to see.

A verb agrees with its subject, not with its predicate noun.

Correct: The next thing to consider is tables and chairs.

235. Collective nouns (like *committee, jury, family, majority, audience, army*) take

(*a*) The singular number when they are represented as units acting like one person.

Correct: The committee has adjourned.

(*b*) The plural when the individuals who make up the group are thought of separately.

Correct: The majority are poor men.

236. A compound subject connected by *either . . . or* or *neither . . . nor* takes

(*a*) A singular verb when each of the subjects is singular.

(*b*) A verb which agrees with the member nearer the verb when the members of the combined subject differ in number.

Correct: Neither regret nor apology was required.
Correct: Neither regret nor apologies were required.
Correct: Neither apologies nor regret was required.

237. The subject of a verb must be in the nominative case. When a pronoun is the subject of a verb understood but not expressed, this rule still holds.

Correct: You are younger than he. [*He* is the subject of *is* understood.]

238. Confusion between Parts of Speech.

Affect is a verb, not a noun.
Clerk is a noun, not a verb.
Considerable is an adjective, not an adverb.
Feature is a noun, not a verb.
First-rate is an adjective, not an adverb.
Gesture is a noun, not a verb.
Heaps is a noun, not an adverb.
Invite is a verb, not a noun.
Loan is a noun, not a verb.
Most is an adjective, not an adverb.
Near-by is an adverb, not an adjective.
Per cent is a phrase, not a noun.
Probe (meaning "investigate") is a verb, not a noun.
Raise is a verb, not a noun.
Real is an adjective, not an adverb.
Recommend is a verb, not a noun.
Suspicion is a noun, not a verb.
Total is a noun, not a verb.
Up to date is a phrase, not an adjective.
Win is a verb, not a noun.

CHAPTER XII

PUNCTUATION

239. General Considerations. — 1. Punctuation is not to be thought of as an additional burden devised by the teacher in order to make it harder to write correctly, but rather as an additional means of avoiding ambiguity and securing just the right shade of meaning.

2. A writer who has this wrong idea of punctuation usually feels that he must first write his theme and then go over it and punctuate it. An experienced writer who has really learned to use punctuation — just as he would use connectives — as one of his most necessary tools, *punctuates as he goes along.* Naturally; because he means his punctuation just as much as he means his words.

3. The rules of punctuation are almost completely controlled by common sense.

4. Most inexperienced writers underpunctuate.

5. Most inexperienced writers overwork the comma and the dash, because they do not completely understand the use of the colon and the semicolon.

6. The effect of this unfamiliarity with the uses of the colon and the semicolon is to diminish the number of possible sentence-patterns that the writer thinks of as he forms his ideas into clusters. Consequently, one of the ways to learn to write more mature sentences is to learn to punctuate them.

THE COLON

The colon is used

240. Before a series of particulars formally introduced.

Correct: The procession will form in the following order: first, etc.

Correct: Having got everything ready, proceed thus: remove the back of the camera, etc.

In connection with this construction, remember

1. Not to use it when the list of particulars is not completed within a single sentence.

Incorrect: There are two reasons why I had rather walk: first because I am more independent. And then consider how much more exercise I shall get.

2. Not to say "the following," but "the following rules," "the following books," etc. That is, always have a noun for "following" to modify.

3. Not to use the colon or any other mark of punctuation when the list of particulars is not *formally* introduced.

Incorrect: Provide yourself with: matches, knife, and compass.

Correct: Provide yourself with matches, knife, and compass.

241. To separate the parts of a compound sentence when they are not bound together by a conjunction, provided that the second part proves or explains the first.

Correct: In one respect, at least, he was distinguished: he had dined with the king.

A simple test of this construction is to ask if the first part of the sentence is really equivalent to the formal introduction ("the following order") spoken of in the

preceding rule. That is, does the sentence about the man who had dined with the king really mean "he was distinguished for the following reason: he had dined with the king"? Clearly it does. Therefore, the colon is required. As you go on, you will often wish to write such sentences, because they are less formal than those mentioned under the preceding rule.

THE SEMICOLON

The semicolon is used

242. To separate the clauses of a compound sentence when they are not bound together by a conjunction.

Correct: They have no curiosity; they cannot give themselves over to random provocations; they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake. — STEVENSON.

243. To separate the clauses of a compound sentence when they are bound together, not by a conjunction, but by a conjunctive adverb (such as *accordingly*, *also*, *hence*, *however*, *besides*, *moreover*, *still*, *then*, and *therefore*).

Correct: He had expected no such reward; hence he was all the more delighted when it came.

244. Whenever a mark similar to a comma, but heavier, is needed. This is particularly the case with a series of long phrases or clauses of which one or more contain commas.

Correct: Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, which every one has read; *The True-born Englishman*, which is fairly well known; and the *Review*, which is hardly known at all. [Notice that but for the relative clauses these three titles would be separated by commas.]

THE COMMA

The comma is used

245. To set off words in apposition.

Correct: The final speaker, a sophomore, made an excellent impression.

246. To set off words inserted parenthetically.

Correct: The game, however, was not yet lost.

247. To set off a vocative.

Correct: You yourself, Sir, have shown us the way.

248. To separate the clauses of a compound sentence, if they are joined by a conjunction and if (see Section 243) a semicolon is not required. Cf. Section 323.

Correct: The battle was sharp and decisive, and all was over in three quarters of an hour.

249. To separate the members of a series, provided (see Section 244) a semicolon is not required.

Correct: They were a plodding, industrious, religious people.

Note that a comma is generally used after the next to the last member of such a series even when *and* follows.

Correct: Men, women, and children.

Note also that the comma is not used to separate from its noun the final adjective of a series.

Incorrect: A huge, expensive, ugly, chair.
Correct: A huge, expensive, ugly chair.

Note also that if the final adjective of such a series is very closely connected with its noun the preceding adjective is not followed by a comma.

Correct: A poor old man. [Here *old man* has the effect of a single word; consequently there should be no comma after *poor*. A fairly good test in such cases is to ask if the last two adjectives can be transposed: if they cannot, the rule above may safely be applied.]

250. To separate a non-restrictive clause from its antecedent.

Correct: The secretary of the club, who spoke next, advanced a better argument.

That this is clearly a non-restrictive clause may be seen by contrasting it with a restrictive clause; for example, "Members of the club *who favor the motion* will please raise their hands." If the words *members of the club* stood alone they would be unrestricted, — that is, they would indicate all the members. But the clause *who favor the motion* restricts, or narrows, the meaning of the antecedent so that it includes not all, but those only to whom the clause applies. The clause, therefore, limits the meaning of its antecedent just as an adjective would do. It is built right into the sentence. To remove it would change the meaning. Consequently we do not wish, by surrounding it with commas, to give the impression that it could be removed without altering the sense. On the other hand, if the non-restrictive clause in the earlier example be removed, the remaining words ("The secretary of the club advanced a better argument") still keep their meaning.

Summary: Restrictive relative clauses, being *built in*, are not punctuated; non-restrictive relative clauses, being *removable*, are punctuated.

The relative pronoun *that* is preferable to *which* in restrictive clauses.

251. Restrictive and non-restrictive phrases are precisely similar to restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, and follow the same rules.

Correct: The day following the storm was clear. [Restrictive phrase, and therefore not punctuated.]

Correct: The soldiers, following the example of their leader, plunged in. [Non-restrictive phrase, and therefore punctuated.]

252. To separate from the main clause a preceding clause, a long phrase, or an absolute construction.

Correct: When all the votes had been counted, the chairman announced the result. [Clause preceding main clause.]

Correct: In spite of every precaution known to the most skillful scientists of all the world, the experiment failed. [Long phrase preceding main clause.]

Correct: The votes having been counted, the chairman announced the result. [Absolute construction preceding main clause.]

253. To set off certain connectives (such as *however, moreover, nevertheless, accordingly, on the other hand*, and the like) from the words which follow them. But note (Section 243) that a semicolon is often required *before* these words, and note also that sometimes they are so closely connected with what follows that no comma is needed after them.

254. To indicate a pause.

Not incorrect: I will do so if I can.

Better (if more hesitation is to be suggested): I will do so, if I can. [A dash (see Section 261) would make the pause still more suggestive.]

255. To make the meaning clear. Cf. Sections 322–3.

Misleading: From the mountain wagons could be seen.
Clear: From the mountain, wagons could be seen.

THE APOSTROPHE

The apostrophe is used

256. To form the possessive of most nouns.

1. Most singular nouns (and plural nouns not ending in *s*) form the possessive by adding *'s*. Plural nouns ending in *s* form the possessive by adding merely the apostrophe.

2. Singular nouns which end in *s* usually form the possessive by adding *'s*, but may add merely the apostrophe.

Incorrect: Keat's, Burn's, Dicken's.
Correct: Keats's or Keats', Burns's or Burns', Dickens's or Dickens'.

3. The phrases *somebody* (or *some one*) *else*, *nobody* (or *no one*) *else*, and *everybody* (or *every one*) *else* form the possessive by adding *'s* to *else*.

Correct: Somebody else's shoes are in my locker.

257. To form the plural of words, letters, or figures.

Correct: Dot your *i*'s and cross your *t*'s.
Correct: Do not use so many *and*'s.
Correct: Make your 4's more plainly. (But, of course, we should say, "The men marched in column of fours.")

258. The apostrophe is *not* used

1. To form the nominative plural of proper nouns.

Incorrect: The Thomas's both came.
Correct: The Thomases both came.

2. To form the possessive case of pronouns.

Incorrect: It's effect was startling.
Correct: Its effect was startling.

THE DASH

The dash is used

259. To inclose words which are interpolated. For this purpose the dash is more informal than the parenthesis.

Correct: We may not be said to be able to study — *a fortiori* do any of the things we study *for* — unless we are able to speak.

260. To indicate an abrupt change of direction in the thought.

Correct: While as for Socrates — but enough of philosophy.

261. To indicate a marked pause for dramatic effect.

Correct: I opened the door, expecting to see you, and there was — the Dean.

262. After a comma, to indicate that what follows is in apposition with, or an expansion of, what precedes.

Correct: The day before Christmas I lost my purse, — a particularly unfortunate accident at just that time.

THE HYPHEN

The hyphen is used

263. At the end of a line (never at the beginning of the following line) when the last word in the line is divided.

Correct: The building had been under construction for several months.

264. To separate the parts of certain compound words. (If in doubt, consult the dictionary.) Note that there is no hyphen in *together, semicolon, football.*

265. The ironical use of marks of interrogation and exclamation should be avoided.

Objectionable: With these polite (?) words, he slammed the door.

Objectionable: After this modest (!) dinner, we did not feel like doing much.

PUNCTUATION OF TITLES

266. Though some publishers print titles of books in ordinary type, the usual practice is to employ either italics — the sign for which is a single line drawn under each word to be italicized — or quotation marks. Particular care should be taken to leave no doubt whether the title of a book or the name of a character is meant: Tom Jones and *Tom Jones*, Hamlet and *Hamlet*, are quite different. (Cf. § 318.)

PUNCTUATION OF QUOTATIONS AND OF CONVERSATION

267. A quotation introduced by one's own words should be preceded by a comma, comma and dash, colon, or colon and dash, according to the length of the quotation and the formality with which it is introduced.

268. A direct quotation should be preceded and followed by double marks of quotation. An indirect quotation, unless the writer desires to call particular attention to certain words in it, should not be inclosed in quotation marks.

Correct: "I do not care to go," he said. [Direct quotation.]

Correct: He said that he did not care to go. [Indirect quotation.]

Correct: Emerson said that the Lord's Supper did not "interest" him. [Indirect quotation calling attention to some of Emerson's phraseology.]

269. When the quotation is cut into two or more parts by interpolations (such as "said he," "I replied," etc.), each of the parts should be inclosed in double marks of quotation.

Correct: "Some books," says Bacon, "are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

270. When long passages are quoted, the usual practice is to place quotation marks at the beginning of the quotation, at the beginning of each paragraph, and at the end.

271. A quotation within a quotation should be surrounded by single quotation marks.

Correct: "Do you remember," he asked, "that phrase of Lowell's about the crows that 'flapped over' by two's and three's?"

272. Do not make a practice of using quotation marks to excuse slang. If a phrase requires apologetic quotation marks, it is usually not the best phrase to employ.

Objectionable: We "took in" the "show."
Better: We went to the play.

But technical terms, and words referred to as such, may be inclosed in quotation marks.

Correct: He explained what a "range-finder" was. [Technical term.]

Correct: The derivation of "wanton" is interesting. [Word referred to as such.]

CHAPTER XIII

SPELLING

THERE are various reasons which make some words difficult for all to spell and many words difficult for some.

273. Many words come from foreign languages and have in part kept their foreign form. If we do not know the foreign language in question, we are likely to forget that such words as *dénouement* and *littérateur* have been taken over without any change in form. So, though we have no accents in English and though *literature* has been in the language so long as to lose one of its *t*'s, we must spell *dénouement* and *littérateur* in the foreign way and pronounce them in the foreign way until good usage permits a change. Compare also

fiancé (masc.)	fiancée (fem.) née (fem.)
alumnus (masc. sing.)	alumna (fem.)
alumni (masc. pl.)	alumnæ (fem. pl.)

274. Many English words come from foreign languages and carry about them signs of their origin which are not perceived by those ignorant of these languages and not always recalled by those who know only a little of them. For example, the prefix *ante-* means *before* (as in *antecedent*, *anteroom*, and *antedate*); the prefix *anti-* means *against* (as in *antislavery*). To remember one's Latin, Greek,

French, and German is, therefore, a great help in spelling correctly.

275. It is quite possible, however, to misspell by recalling a foreign spelling when one should not do so; for example, to put two *t*'s in *literature* or to write *cieling* for *ceiling*.

276. Many misspellings are due to carelessness in pronunciation, especially of unaccented syllables; that is to say, many persons misspell because when they write they imitate the inaccurate pronunciation of themselves and those about them. This fact goes far to account for the frequent misspelling of such words as "can*d*idate," "Feb*r*uary," "gover*n*ment," "labo*r*atory," "min*i*ature," "soph*o*more," and "z*oo*logy."

277. Many words are pronounced alike or nearly alike, but spelled differently:

alley	ally	
angel	angle	
born	borne	
breath	breathe	
canvas	canvass	
capital	capitol	
cite	sight	site
cloths	clothes	
coarse	course	
complement	compliment	
deceased	diseased	
decent	descent	dissent
desert	dessert	
dual	duel	
dyeing	dying	
fir	fur	
formerly	formally	

idle	ideal	idyl(l)
later	latter	
lead	led	
lessen	lesson	
lightening	lightning	
passed	past	
planned	planed	
precede	proceed	
principal	principle	
quite	quiet	
rap	wrap	
-right (copyright)	-wright (playwright)	
shone	shown	
stationary (adj.)	stationery (noun)	
statue	stature	statute
strait	straight	
then	than	
there	their	
thorough	through	
to	too	two
track	tract	
weather	whether	
who's	whose	
you're	your	

278. The confusion of prefixes is frequent.

1. Ante- (=before) and anti- (=against).

Correct: anteroom, antedate, antediluvian, antecedent.
Correct: antislavery, anticlimax.

(But *anticipate*, where we should expect *ante-*, is an exception.)

2. Al- and all-.

Correct: Almighty, almost, already, altogether, always. (*Alright* for *all right* should particularly be avoided.)

3. De- (=about) and di(s)- (=apart from).

Correct: Describe, descent, despair.

Correct: dissent, disappear, disappoint, dissatisfy, distribute, divide.

4. For-, fore-, and four-.

Correct: forbear, forty.

Correct: forefinger, forehead, foresee, forewarn.

Correct: fourteen.

279. The confusion of suffixes is also frequent.

1. -al, -el, and -le.

Compare pedal, peddle; model, muddle.

2. -al and -all.

Correct: withal, gradual.

3. -ance, -ence, -ense, and -ents.

Correct: attendance, perseverance, assistance (cf. assistants).

Correct: coherence, independence (cf. dependents or dependants).

Correct: defense or defence.

Correct: precedence (cf. precedents).

4. -ar, -er, -eur, and -or. This is the great class of nouns of agency. The largest number of them end in *-er*, but many take the other terminations.

Correct: beggar, burglar, scholar, vulgar, calendar (noun), collar.

Correct: amateur, chauffeur, connoisseur, grandeur, monsieur.

Correct: actor, bachelor, cultivator, demonstrator, educator, inspector, operator, professor, separator, suitor, tailor, transgressor, translator.

(In the *-or* words we have to be particularly careful when, as very often happens, *-or* is added to a verb.

Thus, *alligator*, *corridor*, and *hector* are much easier to spell than *actor* and *translator*.

Help in spelling some of these words may be found by remembering derivatives in which the troublesome letter comes under the accent and is, therefore, very easily recognized. Thus, in *burglar* the *a* is unaccented, and many persons are tempted to write it as an *e*; but in *burglarious* the *a*, coming under the accent, stands out clearly. Compare *tutor — tutorial*, *professor — professorial*, *dictator — dictatorial*, *orator — oratorical*, and *equator — equatorial*.

5. -ar and -iar. *Similar* and *familiar* are especially troublesome.

6. -ary and -ery.

Correct: stationary (adj.), imaginary, dictionary, confectionary, visionary.

Correct: stationery (noun), cemetery.

7. -ess, the feminine termination, and -ness, the abstract termination, are especially troublesome when the stem to which they are added ends in *n*. Compare *lioness* and *meanness*.

8. -ful (not full). *Masterful*, *dutiful*, *powerful*, and many words ending in *-ful* make no trouble because they do not, like *handful*, *cupful*, *armful*, and *spoonful*, suggest a phrase having the same sound and meaning. Compare

He carried a cupful of tea.

He carried a cup full of tea.

NOTE. — The plural is *-fuls*, *e.g.*, cupfuls.

9. -for and -fore. Distinguish between *therefor* and *therefore*.

10. -ible and -able. No rule can be given to dis-

tinguish these common suffixes. We should expect *-able* in words from the Latin first conjugation and *-ible* in words from the other conjugations. This rule, however, often fails. There are many more words in *-able* than *-ible*. The following words in *-ible* are frequently misspelled:

accessible	forcible
audible	illegible
comprehensible	indestructible
convertible	plausible
eligible	sensible
expressible	

11. -ise and -ize. The error is more likely to be the use of *-ize* for *-ise* than the reverse.

Correct: advise (cf. the noun *advice*), devise (cf. the noun *device*), surmise, surprise.
Correct: civilize.

12. -y and -ey.

Correct: ally, embassy, vary.
Correct: galley, medley, pulley.

280. Many misspellings occur through confusion of words which, though distinguishable in sound, are naturally associated. Thus, *genealogy* and *mineralogy* are often misspelled because the ending *-ology* (as in *geology* and *theology*) is the more frequent. *Height* is troublesome because the analogy of *depth*, *width*, *breadth*, etc., tempts us to add an *h*. *Twelfth* needs attention because there is no *v* in it, as there is in the commoner word *twelve*.

281. Vowel changes often occur when abstract terminations are added to nouns or verbs, and these changes must be remembered. Compare

abstain	abstinence
explain	explanation
maintain	maintenance
pronounce	pronunciation
speak	speech
sustain	sustenance

282. The combinations *ei* and *ie* are very frequently confused. If either a *c* or an *l* precedes, some help can be got from the so-called " Celia rule," which is that after *c*, *e* comes before *i* (as it does in *Celia*), and that after *l*, *i* follows (as it does in *Celia*). Other troublesome words in this class are *deign*, *feign*, *feint*, *siege*, *seize*, *sieve*.

283. Transposition is liable to occur in such words as tra*ge*dy (often misspelled *tradegy*), p*er*haps, stra*te*gic, acc*u*stomed, irre*le*vant.

284. Words like *sergeant* are often misspelled because certain letters in them are not pronounced as written.

285. Of the many troublesome proper names, a few that occur frequently may be mentioned:

Edgar Al*l*an Poe	Hazl*itt*	Edmund Spen*s*er
Jane Aust*e*n	Ben J*o*nson	Thackera*y*
Bri*t*ish	Samuel Jo*hn*son	Woo*ll*ey
Col*e*ridge	Macaul*ay*	Woodb*e*rry
George (and President) El*i*ot	Shell*e*y	W*o*rdsworth
	Herbert Spencer	

286. Words often Misspelled.

(The troublesome part of the word is usually italicized.)

ac*com*modate	adv*i*ser	all*y*
acc*u*stomed	agr*ee*able	all right (never *alright*)
acknowl*edge* (cf. priv*ilege*)	*ai*sle	already (cf. the phrase *all ready*)
	alley	

altogether (cf. the phrase *all together*)
alumnus (masc. sing.)
alumna (fem. sing.)
alumni (masc. pl.)
alumnæ (fem. pl.)
ang*el*
ang*le*
Edgar Allan Poe
anon*y*mous
app*a*rent (cf. appear)
arctic
a*ss*a*ss*in
a*th*lete
atta*ch*
attend*a*nce
audi*e*nce

ba*ch*elor
ba*l*ance
ba*tt*alion
beau*x* (plural)
begg*a*r
begi*nn*ing
behav*ior* (or behav*iour*)
bel*ie*f
benefi*t*ed, benefi*t*ing
bor*n*
bor*ne*
boundary
breath*e* (verb)
burg*l*ar

Burns' or Burns's (not Burn's)
bus*i*ness

calend*a*r (noun)
calende*r* (verb)
cas*ua*lty
cat*a*logue
cemet*e*ry
cer*e*mony
change*a*ble
choi*c*e
ch*oo*se
chose
cloth*es* (garments)
cloth*s* (pl. of *cloth*)
cohere*n*ce
comple*m*ent
comple*x*ion
compli*m*ent
conce*i*ve
confectiona*r*y
conven*ie*nce
con*sc*ience
con*sc*ien*t*ious
contempora*r*y
criticize
*cry*stal
curr*a*nt
curr*e*nt
customary

dece*a*se
dece*i*ve
decision
defin*i*te

describe
despair
desperate
despond*e*nt
dessert (cf. *desert*)
develop (e) (But not devel*l*ope)
Dicke*n*s (poss. Dickens' or Dickens's)
dictiona*r*y
di*n*ing
disagree*a*ble
di*s*a*pp*ear
di*s*a*pp*oint
di*s*a*pp*rove
disease
dispe*l*
di*ss*ipate
d*i*vide
dro*pp*ed

ecstacy
eighth
eligible
E*l*iot (George and President Charles W.)
embarrass
especially
exaggerate
excel
ex*h*ilarate
extension
extol

familiar (cf. *similar*)
fascinate
feasible
February
fiancé (masc.)
fiancée (fem.)
forcible
formally
formerly
forth
forty
fourth
freshman (adj.)

gaol
genealogy
gnaw
government
grievous
guardian

harass
height
heinous
hoarse

Iliad
impossible
independent
indispensable
infinite
ingenious
ingenuous
insensible
intellect
interrupt
irrelevant
irresistible
it's (*it is*)
its (possessive of *it*)

Johnson, Dr. Samuel
Jonson, Ben
journal
judg(e)ment

knowledge (cf. privilege)

laboratory
legitimate
license
lightning (cf. lightening)
lilies
literature
loose
lose
lovable

maintain
maintenance
manageable
meanness
miniature

née

oblige
occasionally
odor
Odyssey

parallel
parliament
playwright
politics
possess
predecessor
preferred
prescribe
privilege (cf. knowledge)
professor
pronunciation (cf. *pronoun*)
prophecy (noun)
prophesy (verb)
propose
proscribe
Psyche
purpose
pursue

really
receptacle
referred
rehearsal
religious
repetition
rhythm
righteous
ridiculous

sacrilegious
scholar
secretary
semicolon (not semi-colon)
sensitive
serviceable
Shelley
shining
shriek
siege
sieve
similar (cf. *familiar*)
skil(l)*ful*
Spencer, Herbert
Spenser, Edmund
subordinate
successful
supersede
swimming

temperament
Thackeray
truly
twelfth

undoubtedly (not undoubtably)
until

vegetable
villain

welfare
Welsh

yeoman

CHAPTER XIV

PRONUNCIATION

287. General Considerations. — As soon as we stop to think about it, we realize that most of our English composition consists of speech. The number of words that we utter in a single week is for most of us greater than the number that we write in a year. The bearing of this upon the whole matter of correctness and ease in written composition is obvious: if we allow a gulf to form between our careful written composition and our careless spoken English, the mother tongue will never be really useful to us either in speech or writing.

Nothing is of greater importance than that we should try to apply in speech everything that we learn about writing. We must overcome a certain bashfulness which makes nearly all of us afraid to speak as well as we can and as we know we should. We must overcome the notion that precision of speech does not go with force of character, that it is a part of the critical, æsthetic temperament, rather than the rough and ready, efficient temperament. We must remember that a nation cannot become great unless it has a language, and that it can have no language worthy of the name unless we all help to take care of it. Read aloud, therefore, both your own writing and the work of others. The more you do so, the better you will speak and write. Practice by yourself. Use every

opportunity to speak in unison with others, for you can then practice without attracting attention. If you catch yourself falling into bad pronunciation when you are hurried, mark the words which bother you, take them up one by one when you are alone and have plenty of time, learn to speak them correctly, and then practice using them more and more rapidly until no emergency can trap you into error.

288. The Speaking Voice. — Even in a book on English composition a word should be said about the use of the voice. As a nation, Americans are ridiculed abroad for their unpleasant voices. They are said to speak too loudly and too much through the nose. Certainly the contrast between the average English voice and the average American voice gives an American small reason to feel proud. Every one should, therefore, remember to speak from his lips rather than from his throat or through his nose, to use enough voice but not too much, to avoid speaking always on the same level, to speak distinctly, and to cultivate a bright, crisp voice, full of color and flexibility, and not a thick, flat voice which muffles and dulls the tone. Many of these good qualities will creep into our voices as soon as we remember that, in order to speak, we must open our mouths and use our lips. Milton wrote that the speech of boys should " be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels. For we Englishmen," he thought, " being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue; but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward." Watch yourself and see if this is not more or less true in your case.

289. Good Usage in Speech. — Loyalty to country and to locality ought not to make us cling to bad English. We are not Englishmen, of course: we do not pronounce *were* as if it rhymed with *there*, or *black* as if it rhymed with *check*. At the same time, it is a safe rule to require every perceptible departure from English usage to justify itself. For example, in such words as *observatory*, *conservatory*, *stationery*, and *military* the Englishman hits the accented syllable hard and rushes the others; many Americans pump out those syllables so that the last word sounds like *Milly Terry*. In these cases the American pronunciation is certainly eccentric and should be modified in the direction of the English pronunciation. And so it is with many words.

The habits of speech in our own locality often seem curious to people from other localities. Sometimes we are right and they are wrong, but sometimes it is the other way. In rural New England the final *r* is slighted. The *hoss* is driven down the "road." [1] In this same New England the "chickin" sits on the *roof*, and many other things happen which could not possibly occur where English is correctly pronounced. The long *a* is stretched too far. Black *barss* are caught, and in a *marss* of other words this important vowel is too much lengthened. In the West, final *r* is overdone and the unaccented *e* tends to becomes *u* in certain words, with the result that *tickuts* for the *theater-r-r* are bought by those who do not *prefer-r* to sit on the *por-r-rch* and read *poums;* while in the next house the *sopranna* accompanies herself on the *pianna*. In the South, where the fried *chick'n* is so good, people

[1] The *oa* in *road* is often pronounced in New England with a rounded *u*, much like the French *o* (as in *botte*).

sit on the *po'ch* and play *kyards.* Even the metropolis is not perfect: "It was," says Kipling in *My Sunday at Home*, "the unreproducible, slid *r* as he said this was his 'fy-ist' visit to England, that told me he was a New Yorker from New York." It was probably this same man who talked about *vy-ibs* and *gy-irls.*

The more definite mistakes of pronunciation may be roughly divided into

(*a*) The incorrect pronunciation of letters (§§ 290–302).
(*b*) Incorrect accent (§ 303).
(*c*) The omission of letters that are in the word and the insertion of letters that are not in it (§ 304).
(*d*) Slovenly slurrings (§ 305).
(*e*) Mistakes in the pronunciation of foreign words (§ 306).

It will be convenient to consider these separately.

290. Incorrect Pronunciation of Letters. — Let us take up the vowels, accented and unaccented, and note a few common mistakes under each. As we do so, let us particularly notice the difficulties raised by unaccented vowels. The more one considers these difficulties, the more one agrees with Richard Grant White's remark that "it is in the delicate but firm utterance of the unaccented vowels with correct sound that the cultured person is most surely distinguished from the uncultured."

291. *Accented a.* — Accented *a* is often incorrectly pronounced in *apparatus, apricot, gratis, status, was* (not *wuz*) *mineralogy*, and *genealogy.* Care should be taken in pronouncing *have.* The Yankee farmer says "hev ye," and so, more or less, do many New Englanders. The broad *a* seems likely to come in. Some New Englanders, as we have seen above, overdo it; but unquestionably

aunt, *laugh*, *last*, *past*, and *fast*, as pronounced in New England, have the weight of authority so distinctly on their side that *laff* and *ant* are fast becoming provincial.

292. *Unaccented a.* — Unaccented *a* tends to become *u* in such words as *melancholy;* to disappear in such words as *pedal* ("The ped*a*l of the bicycle," for example, is often pronounced as if these two nouns had the same ending); or to become *i* in such words as *damage*, *cabbage*, and *package*. When the word *have* is unaccented ("He ought to have gone") it is often so badly treated that it sounds like *of*, and sometimes is written so.

293. *Accented e.* — Accented *e* must be given a clear *e* sound and not allowed to slide into a *u* sound, as it does when some people say *America*, *Philadelphia*, *cellar*, *yellow*, and *merry*.

294. *Unaccented e.* — Unaccented *e* sometimes makes trouble in the words *enough*, *connected*, *endure*, and *poem*. It is particularly common to forget that the italicized *e*'s in daguerr*e*otype and vaudev*i*lle are silent. Then we have the many words in *-ent* which we must not make sound like *unt* or like a vocalic *n*. *Student*, for example, is not *stoodunt*, nor is it *stood'nt*. And the case is similar with *element*, *different*, and *independent*. In *hundred* the *e* should be protected from a *u*-sound. Verbs ending in *-en*, like *lighten* and *weaken*, present the same dangers as words in *-ent*. Remember not to pronounce *intellect* as if it were spelled *interlect*, and do not slight the second *e* in *telegram*.

295. *Accented i.* — Accented *i* makes comparatively little trouble, but attention should be paid to the *i* in *-itis* (*tonsillitis*, *bronchitis*, *appendicitis*), which has the sound of *i*, not of long *e*. Usage differs in the case of words ending in *-ile:* in England these words are usually

pronounced long, as in *hostile*. In America, the *i*, as in *infantile*, may usually be either long or short.

296. *Unaccented i.* — Unaccented *i*, in careless speech, verges well toward *u*, as in *American* and *inclination*. In *biography*, *Italian*, and *genuine* it should be carefully treated, and from *medicine* it should not be omitted.

297. *Accented o.* — Accented *o* needs to be protected from the prolonged *aw* sound. To say *sa-awftly* is to spoil any line of poetry — or prose either, for that matter — in which that beautiful word occurs. The *aw* sound also tends to spoil *Boston*, *coffee*, *cost*, *dog*, *God*, *lost*, *gone*, and *song*. In New England there is a tendency to make *cluset* out of *closet* and to give the short instead of the long sound to the double *o* in such words as *broom*, *room*, *soon*, and *root*. An extraordinary number of people put an extra *o* into *zoölogy* making it *zoo-ology*, — perhaps because the abbreviation of *zoölogical garden* to *zoo* misleads them.

298. *Unaccented o.* — Unaccented *o*, when carelessly pronounced, tends to disappear or to become *u*: it disappears when some people pronounce *history*, and easily becomes *u* in *society*, *philosophy*, *somebody*, *record*, *locomotive*, and *percolate*.

299. *Accented u.* — Accented *u* is perhaps the worst treated of all vowels, particularly in homely words like *stew*, where we tend to give it the double *o* sound; and the same tendency more or less injures *duty*, *student*, *duly*, *due*, *induce*, *tune*, *stupid*, *Tuesday*, and *new*. We must be careful of the word *brusque;* and without going so far as to adopt the English pronunciation of *sure* (which almost rhymes with *paw*) we ought to remember that it does not rhyme with *brewer*.

300. *Unaccented u.* — Unaccented *u* has, in such a word as *affluence*, *institute*, and *influence*, the same dangers as the accented vowel. In *accurate* it must not become *e* (*ackerit*).

301. *Y*, usually unaccented in English, is in danger, like so many other unaccented vowels, of becoming *u*, as in *analysis* and *paralysis*. When (as in *analytical* and *paralytic*) the *y* is accented, we pronounce it correctly, and we must remember that in such words as *analysis* and *paralysis* it is the same sound, but shorter.

302. *Consonants.* — The consonants which cause the most trouble are final *g* and final *r*. Of the first, all Americans give us too little: their tendency is to speak of "goin' fishin'." Of the second, New Englanders give us too little and Westerners too much, although there is this to be said for New Englanders, — that they often insert an *r* when there is none, with the result that we have *lawr* for *law* "the idea rof," "I saw rim," and sometimes even "drawrings."

303. *Incorrect Accent.* — Instead of accenting the right syllable, we sometimes throw the accent too far forward as in *mischiévous* instead of the correct *míschievous;* but more often too far back, with a bad effect upon such words as *idea*, *rebate* (verb), *import* (verb), *expert* (adj.), *museum*, *ally*, *adult*, *survey* (verb), *condolence*, and *lyceum*.

Sometimes, of course, for emphasis, and particularly for contrast, we allow ourselves to put the accent upon a prefix which really should not be accented. Thus, we say in conversation, "Neither its *of*fensive nor its *de*fensive resources were adequate," or, "Both *im*migration and *em*igration increased," or, "It was *ob*jective rather than *sub*jective."

304. The Omission and Insertion of Letters. — When there are so many pitfalls in the pronunciation of words it would seem unnecessary to borrow trouble by bringing in letters which are not necessary. Yet this is what we do when we say *elum* for *elm*, *spasum* for *spasm*, *casuality* for *casualty*, *athelete* for *athlete;* when we add a superfluous *t* to *attacked* or to *across*, an extra *d* to *drowned* (making *drownded*), a final *h* to *height*, a needless *y* to *column*, a *u* to *rhythm* or a fourth *o* to *zoölogy*. As if to make up for this, we sometimes allow ourselves to omit letters which should be pronounced. Thus, *when*, *why*, and *whether* acquire cockney forms (*wen*, *wy*, and *wether*), *temperament* loses its *a*, *February* its first *r*, words ending in *-ally* (like *frantically*) lose the *a*, *miniature* very commonly loses its second *i*, *recognize* its *g*, *tract*, *kept*, and *swept* their final *t*, *arctic* its first *c*, and *government* its first *n*.

305. Slovenly Slurrings. — We need to be especially careful in pronouncing words in which there are two or more unaccented syllables in succession; otherwise, *certificate* will tend to become *stifkit*, and *regular*, *memory*, *company*, and *library* will each lose a syllable. We must also remember to make a correct division of words when one ends and the next begins with a consonant. In such cases we tend to run them together in order to smooth the sound. Thus, *old* before *man* becomes *ole*, *must* before *go* becomes *mus'*, *used* before *to* becomes *use'*, *have* before *to* becomes *haf*, and *want* before *to* becomes *wan'*. Other cases follow:

give me	becomes	gimme
good deal	becomes	good eel
great deal	becomes	gray deal
don't you	becomes	don't chew

meet you	becomes	me chew
that's all right	becomes	tha's a' right
got to	becomes	gotta
at all	becomes	a tall
saw a	becomes	saw ray
draw a	becomes	draw ray
idea of	becomes	idea rov

306. Pronunciation of Foreign Words.

A few foreign words need attention, for example:

drámatis persónae	début
deus ex máchina	ad infinítum
persóna non grata	memoir
vaudeville	

307. Words often Mispronounced.

abdo'men
absent' (verb)
ab'stract (adjective)
abstract' (verb)
accent' (verb)
accli'mate
across: not acrosst
address' (verb and noun): not ad'-dress
ad infini'tum
Adō'nis
adult'
aëroplane (ā'ĕr-ō, not a-rē-o)
ag'grandize
ally'
alma māter
ăltercation

amateur' (-tûr): not am'achoor, ama-toor, or amatūre
amē'nable
apparātus (ā as in *ache*)
ap'ropos'
Arctic: not Artic
athletic: not ath-e-let-ic
au'tomo'bile
avenue: not -noo

boundary: not boundry
bouquet: bo͞o-, not bō-
bro͞om: not bro͝om

clique: klēk
column: -ŭm, not -yŭm
com'parable
com'plex (adjective and noun)
condo'lence
co͞upon: ko͞o-, not kū-
creek: krēk, not krĭk
cūlinary: kū-li-, not kŭl-i-

daguerreotype: da-guerre'-o-type, not da-guer-rē-o-type
deaf: dĕf, not dēf
des'picable

diamond: not dimond
dra'matis perso'nae (may be used as a singular noun)

enqui'ry (or inqui'ry)
x'quisite
extra: not extry

February
finance: fĭn-ănś or fī-ănś, not fĭ-nans; same in plural
for'midable

geneal'ogy
genuĭne: not -īne
govern'ment
grimace'

har'ass
hearth: härth, not hērth
height (not heighth)
Hercu'lean
history: not histry
hoof: ho͝of, not ho͞of
hori'zon: not hor'-izon
hos'pitable

ide'a: not ī'dea or idear (an *r* is often added, especially in the phrase "the idea(*r*) of")
im'pious
import'ed
incom'parable
in'crease (noun)
increase' (verb)
Ĭtalian
-ītis (*e.g.* bronchītis): ītis, not ētis

lam'entable
Latin: not Lat'n
library: not libry
literature: not litera-choor or literatour

mēdio'cre
memoir (mĕm'-wŏr, mĕm-wär, or mēm-wär; but the last syllable should never be pronounced *oar*)
mĕn'ŭ: not may-new
Messrs. (messieurs) (not "messers")
mineral'ogy
muse'um
mustache', or mous-tache'

nāpe: not năp
new: not noo

obtūse: not -oo-
often (*t* silent)
oleomar'garine (*g* is hard, as in *go*)

policeman (Sound the *o*.)
prĕc'edent (noun)
prē'fix (noun)
prēfix' (verb)
prĕsentation
pri'marily

quay: kē

rather (not ruther)
real: not reel
record: not recud
reg*u*lar
reservoir: -vwar, not -voy
resour'ces
reverĕnd (Three syllables; final syllable as spelled, not -und; final letter *d*, not *t*)
ro͞om: not ro͝om
ro͞ot: not ro͝ot
ro͞ute

sacrilē'gious
sīnecure
sleek: not slick

soften (silent *t*)
sōōn : not sŏŏn
stātus

testa′tor
thereof : not there-off

thresh-old : not thresh-hold

used : ūzed not ūst

vaga′ry
valuable

vaudeville : vōd-vil (the first *e* is silent)

wish : not wished (present tense)

zō-ŏl′-ogy

CHAPTER XV

ABBREVIATIONS, CAPITALS, FOOTNOTES, ETC.

ABBREVIATIONS

308. A safe general principle is to use as few abbreviations as possible in letters (even business letters) and other formal composition: abbreviations indicate haste, and "nothing is so vulgar," Emerson says, "as haste." In footnotes and other forms of compressed memoranda, tabulations, and the like, more latitude may be taken. But abbreviations, in general, have no place in literature.

309. A few abbreviations, however, are allowable: *M.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*,[1] *Dr.*, *Messrs.* when used before personal names; *Esq.*, and the abbreviations for the various academic degrees (such as *A.B.*, *A.M.*, *D.D.*) when used after personal names; A.M. (*ante meridian*), P.M., *i.e.*, *viz.*, *e.g.*, A.D., and B.C.

310. Write in full *Captain*, *Colonel*, *Major*, *Professor*, *Reverend*, and titles generally.

311. *Etc.* should not be used in literature, and should be sparingly used in any kind of writing: "and so forth," or "and so on" are good substitutes which take only a few seconds to write; a long list of objects is often sufficient without any indication that others might be named; any

[1] *Miss*, not being an abbreviation, requires no period.

pretense of completeness may be avoided by writing " such as " before the list (see the first parenthesis under Section 309 above); and, finally, the tendency (especially in examinations) to hint at inexhaustible reserves when one is rather near the end of one's resources is a demoralizing habit. Unless you really know what you mean by the *etc.*, avoid it in any context.

USE OF CAPITALS

312. Capitalize — 1. The first word of a sentence.

2. The first word of every line of poetry.

3. Proper nouns and adjectives. (But some adjectives formed from proper nouns have so far forgotten their origin as to lose their capitals; for example, *herculean*, *laconic*, and *utopian*.)

4. *North*, *South*, *East*, and *West* when they refer not to points of the compass, but to parts of the country.

5. Titles, when used with the names of the persons who bear them.

Correct: I met Professor Jackson, and another professor whose name I have forgotten.

6. Certain titles which unmistakably designate an individual, even when used without his name.

Correct: The Secretary of State received the note.

7. Any common noun — such as *street*, *square*, *college*, or *river* — when it is a part of a proper name.

Correct: Elm Street is one of our most beautiful streets.

ITALICS[1]

To indicate italics, draw one line under the words to be italicized.

313. Italicize — 1. Titles of books, newspapers, plays, and the like. Observe that

(*a*) If *the* is the first word in the title of a book, this word should appear, italicized, as a part of the title.

Correct: I read *The Tempest* last week.

But if the title is preceded by the author's name in the possessive case, *the*, even though it forms a part of the title, should be omitted.

Incorrect: Shakespeare's *The Tempest.*
Correct: Shakespeare's *Tempest.*

(*b*) In the case of periodicals, the article, even though it may appear in the title, should not be italicized.

Correct: I read it in the *Outlook.*

2. Names of ships.

3. Words when used as such.

Correct: The word *nice* has a curious history. (Cf. § 272.)

314. Be very cautious about using italics for emphasis. In general, depend for emphasis not upon underscoring but upon choice of vivid words.

THE REPRESENTATION OF NUMBERS

In general, a distinction should be made between the literary standard and the commercial or technical stand-

[1] Most, if not all, of these functions may be performed by quotation marks instead of italics. Italics stand out more sharply, however, and are generally preferred.

ard: figures are sparingly used in literature; they are habitually used in commercial or technical writing when they are more effective than words.

315. Ordinarily one should write out

1. Hours of the day. (Two o'clock had just struck.)
2. Ages of persons. (He was twenty years old.)
3. Small sums of money. (I owe you forty cents.)
4. Small numbers. (I read thirty pages.)
5. Large numbers if they can be expressed briefly. (The library contains nearly a million volumes.)

316. Ordinarily one should use figures for

1. The year and the day of the month. (April 19, 1775.)
2. Street numbers. (26 Elm Street.)
3. Numbers of volumes and pages. (See Vol. II, p. 225.)
4. Numbers or sums of money that would be clumsy if written out. (In all, 2317 persons contributed $10,481.50.)

317. Do not begin a sentence with figures.

Incorrect: 1789 asked of a thing, is it rational? 1642 asked of a thing, is it illegal?

FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

318. Footnotes. — If a writer wishes to use the authority of another, or to summarize his ideas, or to quote any portion — however brief — of his actual work, he should make a specific reference, at the bottom of the page, to the precise source from which he has borrowed. This reference should include, first, the name of the author; second, the title (either in italics or in quotation marks); third, the volume and page. Usually it is well to add also

the place and date of publication. In other words, the reference should be full and clear enough to lead straight to the authority cited.

In general, refer to the titles of parts of books (such as essays or chapters) by using quotation marks; to complete volumes or longer works by means of italics. The sign for italics is a single line drawn under the words to be italicized.

Reference to a Book:

C. F. Adams, *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*, II, 141 (Boston, 1901).

Note: Here " II, 141 " means " Volume II, page 141."

Macaulay, *History of England*, Everyman edition, I, 16.

Note: Here we have a book of which there are many editions, differing in pagination. In such cases always specify the edition; otherwise one can look up the passage only with the greatest difficulty.

Reference to a Periodical:

Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 106, p. 78 (July, 1910).

Note: In such a case as this, the thorough way is to give the month and year as well as the volume and page.

Reference to an Essay:

Stevenson, "Æs Triplex," in *Virginibus Puerisque.*

Do not be pedantic about footnotes, but remember that it is better to include unnecessary details than to omit any that are essential.

The following abbreviations are often used in footnotes:

vol. = volume
vols. = volumes
p. = page
pp. = pages
chap. = chapter
bk. = book
l. = line
ll. = lines
§§ = sections
v. = see
cf. = compare
et sqq. or ff. = and following (as in "pp. 37 ff.")
ibid. = in the same place (book, etc.) as the previous reference
s. v. = under the word
ed. = edition of, *or* edited by, *or* editor

319. Bibliographies. — A bibliography is a list, usually alphabetized or otherwise classified, of books and articles relating to a given subject. Every long composition upon a subject that has been much written about should contain such a bibliography.

MISCELLANEOUS DIRECTIONS

320. Parentheses should never be used to indicate that certain words are to be omitted. Such words should be erased or stricken out.

321. Distinguish between two entirely different kinds of clauses introduced by *because*. For example,

(1) He went, because I saw him there.
(2) He went because he wanted to.

In (2) is stated *his reason for going;* in (1), *the writer's reason for believing that he went.* The logic of (1) may seem queer enough; but the idiom is so well established that there is no reason for not using it, if the punctuation is correct.

322. Do not confuse the conjunction *however* with the adverb *however*.

Correct: However hard he tried. [Adverb.]
Correct: However, he tried hard. [Conjunction.]

323. Do not confuse the conjunction *for* with the preposition *for*. Use a comma before the conjunction *for*.

Correct: He ran, for the doctor lived a mile away. [Conjunction.]
Correct: He ran for the doctor. [Preposition.]

EXERCISES

(Covering Chapters XI–XV)

I. Correct the following sentences:

1. To openly admit that one is wrong is very humiliating to you.
2. He thought he would probably come.
3. All of the workmen received two dollars per day.
4. There are a great many men living in this village and who go to the city every day.
5. New York is the termini of the road.
6. The city's indebtedness is increasing.
7. Please make this addenda.
8. Each one said their adieux.
9. To fully atone for this, he must apologize.
10. He regrets that he will be unable to come.
11. Can I have another piece of cake?
12. The choice lies between you and I.
13. *Gulliver's Travels* are worth reading.
14. The committee was in doubt whether their report would be accepted.
15. The following data has been found valuable.
16. Two cherubims were represented in the picture.

17. The view of the waves from the second-story windows were magnificent.

18. The cause of this accident, as well as that of the others, were not revealed.

19. My neighbor, whom I thought would subscribe something, gave more than anyone else.

20. They supposed the owners to be we.

21. The statement has been made that an university's center is the library, and I have no question of it's truth.

22. Either he or myself would have promised our assistance.

23. All doubt of him being unsatisfactory was removed.

24. Those roses smell sweetly, no doubt, but it don't matter to me, for I am feeling very poorly with a cold.

25. Those kind of accidents seem unnecessary.

26. I read Hamlet and also Churchill's The Crisis.

27. The army, with all their baggage, has just passed through the village.

28. Either one large case or two small ones is enough.

29. He expects he will be asked, and I hope he is.

30. Will you be able to personally see both him and I?

II. Write sentences containing the following words correctly used:

radii	automaton	genus
alumnus	stratum	phenomena
hypotheses	theses	addendum

III. Are the following words in the singular or the plural? Give for each both the singular and the plural form, or if either is lacking note the fact.

stamen	fungus	Knight Templar
radius	panacea	lord justice
bacteria	alumni	index
scissors	alumna	heir apparent
Niagara Falls	spoonful	
proceeds	grouse	

IV. Punctuate the following sentences:

1. On his style however the results were unfortunate.

2. Though his health had been infirm for some years before his death his literary activity did not slacken nor did his powers show signs of decline.

3. What we want the Director said in particular is young men and young women who are enthusiastic about the songs and dances.

4. As a painter of manners he recalls two of his predecessors one greater one less great than himself.

5. He crowded his canvas with figures he pursued the fortunes of three or four sets of people at the same time caring little how the fate of the one set affected that of the other he made his novel a sort of chronicle which you might open anywhere and close anywhere instead of a drama animated by one idea and converging towards one center.

6. His carelessness was redeemed by or forgotten in his vivacity.

7. John Richard Green was born in Oxford on 12 December 1837 and educated first at Magdalen College School and afterwards for a short time at a private tutor's.

8. My objections are as follows first I deny that the proposed plan will save expense secondly I deny that it can be put into operation under our system of government and thirdly I see no sufficient reason for abandoning the present method.

9. The house that I prefer, is the one, on the other corner of the street.

10. This proposition is I think pretty difficult in fact Pendennis is the dullest book I ever read.

11. There are two reasons for this change first the number of students is much larger than it used to be. The second reason is the increased number of foreigners.

12. Saint John excited with drink was making some wild quotations out of Macbeth but Swift stopped him drink no

more my lord for gods sake says he I come with the most dreadful news is the queen dead cries out Bolingbroke seizing on a water glass no Duke Hamilton is dead he was murdered an hour ago by Mohun and Macartney they had a quarrel this morning they gave him not so much time as to write a letter he went for a couple of his friends and he is dead and Mohun too the bloody villain who was set on him.

V. Punctuate the following passage:

"So too was his mind admirably fitted for the career he had chosen. It was logical penetrating systematic yet it was also quick and nimble. His views were definite not to say dogmatic and as they were confidently held so too they were confidently expressed. He never struck a doubtful note. He never slurred over a difficulty nor sought when he knew himself ignorant to cover up his ignorance. Imagination was kept well in hand for his constant aim was to get at and deal with the vital facts of every case. If he was not original in the way of thinking out doctrines distinctively his own nor in respect of any exuberance of ideas bubbling up in the course of discussion there was fertility as well as freshness in his application of principles to current questions and in the illustrations by which he enforced his arguments."

VI. Explain the punctuation in the following passage:

As his thinking was exact, so his style was clear-cut and trenchant. Even when he was writing most swiftly, it never sank below a high level of form and finish. Every word had its use and every sentence told. There was no doubt about his meaning, and just as little about the strength of his convictions. He had a gift for terse, vivacious paragraphs commenting on some event of the day or summing up the effect of a speech or a debate. The touch was equally light and firm. But if the manner was brisk, the matter was solid: you admired the keen-

ness of the insight and the weight of the judgment just as much as the brightness of the style. Much of the brightness lay in the humour. That is a plant which blossoms so much more profusely on Transatlantic soil that English readers of the *Nation* had usually a start of surprise when told that this most humorous of American journalists was not an American at all but a European, and indeed a European who never became thoroughly Americanised. It was humour of a pungent and sarcastic quality, usually directed to the detection of tricks or the exposure of shams, but it was eminently mirth-provoking and never malicious. Frequently it was ironical, and the irony sometimes so fine as to be mistaken for seriousness.

VII. Read aloud the following passages, — at first slowly, giving each syllable its correct value. Then, keeping the same values, read them aloud rapidly.

1. It goes without saying that the mightiest influence exerted by the United States in the domain of political science has been due to the example of a democracy successfully working on a large scale. It would be a gross exaggeration to say without qualification that the constitutional reforms of the nineteenth century were caused by the developments in America; but, on the other hand, it is clearly evident that the American Republic has been a powerful factor in the growth of constitutional democracy and of constitutional government in general. In Mexico and the South American republics, this influence is seen in institutions framed obviously after the American type. In European countries, the influence is far less powerful, but even there it has been remarkable. Not always, or even often, taking the shape of systematic theory, the democratic spirit and practice of the United States have, nevertheless, made themselves felt in the development of free institutions. What has been said of democratic government might also be said of federal government, for in this field the practical influence of the American system

has been wide-spread. The systems of Germany, Canada, Australia, Mexico, and Brazil are sufficient evidence of this.[1]

2. "But for one American who comes to look at Essex, twenty go to Godalming and Guildford and Dorking and Lewes and Canterbury. Those Surrey people are not properly English at all. They are strenuous. You have to get on or get out. They drill their gardeners, lecture very fast on agricultural efficiency, and have miniature rifle ranges in every village. It's a county of new notice-boards and barbed-wire fences; there's always a policeman round the corner. They dress for dinner. They dress for everything. If a man gets up in the night to look for a burglar he puts on the correct costume — or doesn't go. They've got a special scientific system for urging on their tramps. And they lock up their churches on a week-day. Half their soil is hard chalk or a rationalistic sand, only suitable for bunkers and villa foundations. And they play golf in a large, expensive, thorough way because it's the thing to do. . . . Now here in Essex we're as lax as the eighteenth century. We hunt in any old clothes. Our soil is a rich succulent clay; it becomes semi-fluid in winter — when we go about in waders shooting duck. All our finger-posts have been twisted round by facetious men years ago. And we pool our breeds of hens and pigs. Our roses and oaks are wonderful; that alone shows that this is the real England. If I wanted to play golf — which I don't, being a decent Essex man — I should have to motor ten miles into Hertfordshire. And for rheumatics and longevity Surrey can't touch us. I want you to be clear on these points, because they really will affect your impressions of this place. . . . This country is a part of the real England — England outside London and outside manufactures. It's one with Wessex and Mercia or old Yorkshire — or for the matter of that with Meath or Lothian. And it's the essential England still. . . ." [2]

[1] C. E. Merriam, *American Political Theories*, New York, Macmillan, 1906, p. 341.

[2] H. G. Wells, *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*, New York, Macmillan, 1916, pp. 29–30.

INDEX

For subtopics under headings printed in SMALL CAPITALS, see the table of contents (pp. vii ff.).

Abbott, Lyman, 252.
Abbreviations, 362.
Adjectives, 325.
Adler, Felix, 89.
Admitted matter, 93.
Adverbs, 325.
Affect, 300.
Aggravate, 300.
Agreement, grammatical, 321 ff.
Alliteration, 296.
Analogies, 16.
Analogy, false, 90.
Analysis in argument, 93; in biography, 67.
Anti-climax, 259.
Antithesis, 259.
Apostrophe, 337.
Arguing in a circle, 89.
ARGUMENT, 79 ff.
Aristotle, 170.
Articles, 323.

Background, 188.
Balance, 301.
Balanced style, 259.
Barrie, Sir J. M., 169, 180.
Becket, Thomas à, 151.
Beecher, H. W., 105.
Begging the question, 89.
Beginnings of exposition, 40; of narrative, 199; of paragraphs, 230; of sentences, 262.
Bennett, Arnold, 172.
Benson, A. C., 72.
Bibliographies, 365.
BIOGRAPHY, 62 ff.
Birmingham, G. A., 183.
Blackmore, R. D., 194.
"Bony" style, 296.
Borrow, George, 133.
Brevity in description, 141.
Brief, 97; rules for, 98.
Bryce, James, 70–72, 228, 313.

Cabot, Dr. R. C., 18.
Capitals, 363.
Carlyle, Thomas, 174, 226, 252, 270.
Causal relation, mistaken, 91.
Characters, 157, 174; action of, 181; description of, 178; exposition of, 180; methods of portraying, 177; origin of, 174; choice of names for, 177.
Character stories, 177.
Chartres Cathedral, 125.
Chesterton, G. K., 227, 231.
Claim, 302.
Clearness, 288; in exposition, 41.
Climax in narration, 156, 202; in sentences, 258.
Coherence in description, 123; in exposition, 38; in narrative, 197; in paragraphs, 220, 229; in sentences, 242, 250.
Collective nouns, 329.
Colon, 332.

Comma, 334.
Complex sentences, 261.
Composition, kinds of, 26.
Compound sentences, 261.
Compound subjects, 329.
Conclude, 302.
Conflicting contentions, 93, 96.
Confusion between parts of speech, 330.
Connectives, 249; between paragraphs, 228; within paragraphs, 226.
Connotation, 289.
Conrad, Joseph, 189.
Considering the reader in criticism, 50; in description, 118; in exposition, 30.
Contents, table of, in theses, 76.
Contrast, 225.
Conversation, punctuation of, 339.
Conviction, 80.
Copeland, C. T., 132, 195.
Could, 328.
CRITICISM, 49 ff.

Dangling modifiers, 243.
Dash, 338.
Deal, 303.
Deduction, 85.
Definition, 41; of terms, 93, 95.
Demean, 303.
Denotation, 289.
Dénouement, 167.
DESCRIPTION, 115 ff.
Description in biography, 67.
Dialect, 186.
Dialogue, 157, 183; paragraphing of, 217.
Dickens, Charles, 163, 175, 178, 187, 263.
Diction in description, 139.
Dictionary, use of, 287.
Differentia, 42.
Dime novels, 150.
Dominant tone in description, 121; in paragraphs, 215, 232.
Doone Valley, The, 194.
Doyle, Sir A. C., 239.
Durand, E. D., 214.
Durham Cathedral, 129.

Each, 303.
Echo in paragraphs, 227.
Edinburgh Castle, 131.
Egdon Heath, 190.
Elegance, 291, 295.
Elegant, 304.
Eliot, C. W., 91, 213, 252, 258.
Emerson, R. W., 252, 260.
Emphasis in description, 135; in exposition, 39; in narration, 199; in paragraphs, 230, 232, 233; in sentences, 251, 260.
English composition, definition of, 3.
Evidence, 81; collecting, 84; in criticism, 55; tests of, 83.
Exaggeration, 290.
Exercises in argument, 109; in biography, 74; in criticism, 57; in description, 145; in diction, 317; in exposition, 46; in gathering and weighing material, 20; in mechanics, 368; in narrative, 204; in paragraphs, 233; in sentences, 272; in the use of reference books, 24.
EXPOSITION, 28 ff.

Fable, 170.
Factor, 304.
Fallacies, 89.
Farther, 304.
Figures of speech, 138, 293.

Fiske, John, 228.
Fix, 304.
Footnotes, 17, 77, 365.
Force, 288, 290, 313.
Froude, J. A., 151.
Fundamental image, 127.
Funny, 305.
Further, 304.

Galsworthy, John, 184.
Generalization, hasty, 15, 90.
Genus, 42.
George Eliot, 175.
Gibbon, Edward, 259, 267, 268.
Good use, 286.
GRAMMAR, 321 ff.
Green, J. R., 268.
Gregory, Lady, 184.
Guess, 305.

Hall, Joseph, 69.
Hardy, Thomas, 167, 179, 189.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 129, 163, 189.
Hearn, Lafcadio, 217.
Hewlett, Maurice, 179, 182, 200.
History of the question, 93, 95.
Hope, Anthony, 171, 185.
Hunt, Leigh, 241.
Huxley, T. H., 81, 85, 222.
Hyphen, 338.
Hypothesis, 87.

Illustrations in exposition, 43.
Imagination, 161.
Imitation jewelry, 291.
IMPROPRIETIES, 298 ff.
Individual, 306.
Induction, 85.
Informal argument, 92, 108.
Introduction in argument, 93; in exposition, 40.
Inversion, 256.
Irving, Washington, 216, 229, 232.
Italics, 364.

James, Henry, 196.
Jewett, Sarah Orne, 186.
Johnson, Samuel, 69, 130, 259, 260.
Judging books, 2.

Kipling, Rudyard, 140, 141, 142, 143, 150, 180, 200, 201, 241, 265.

Lectures, notes on, 1.
Length, 251, 261.
Liable, 307.
Library, use of, 2, 7, 8.
Limiting the field, 14; in biography, 67; in criticism, 50; in description, 121; in exposition, 29; in narrative, 165.
Lincoln, Abraham, 106, 259.
Literary geography, books on, 198.
Locate, 307.
Lockhart, J. G., 133.
Lodge, H. C., 105.
Logic, 13, 15, 85.
Long compositions, 3.
Loose sentences, 257, 262.
Lorna Doone, 194, 264.
Low, W. H., 176.

Macaulay, T. B., 214, 223, 227.
Macomber, Ben, 128.
Mad, 308.
Main issues, 94, 97.
Mark Twain, 172.
Material, 313; for biography, 65; description, 116; exposition, 30; narrative, 158.
MATERIAL, GATHERING AND WEIGHING, 7 ff.
Maupassant, Guy de, 162, 202.
May and *can*, 328.

Meredith, George, 179, 256.
Merrick, Leonard, 184, 202, 203, 220.
Might, 328.
Milton, John, 269.
Misinterpretation in biography, 73.
Monterey, Bay of, 127.
Moore, George, 251.
Morrison, Arthur, 202.
Motivation, 155.
Movement in description, 123; in narrative, 199.
Mutual, 308.

Names, choice of, 177.
NARRATION, 149 ff.
National use, 287.
Newspapers, narrative material in, 160.
Non-restrictive clauses, 335.
Norris, Frank, 250.
Notebook, 19, 162, 187.
Notebooks, Hawthorne's, 162.
Note-taking, 11.
Numbers, 364.

Objective description, 135.
Only, position of, 242.
Oral, 309.
Order. *See* Coherence.
Originality, 17.
Origin of the question, 93, 94.

Palmer, G. H., 252, 256.
Paragraphing of dialogue, 217.
PARAGRAPHS, 209 ff.
Parallel constructions, 226, 244, 259, 265.
Participial phrases, 253.
Parts of speech, confusion between, 330.
Passive voice, 326.
Pater, Walter, 269.
Per, 309.
Periodic sentences, 256, 262.
Persuasion, 80, 102, 104.
Phillpotts, Eden, 124, 193.
Phrasing the proposition, 92.
Pinero, Sir A. W., 184.
Plagiarism, 17.
Planning the argument, 92; exposition, 31; narrative, 164; paragraphs, 224.
Plot, 166.
Plural, formation of, 323.
Poe, E. A., 168, 201.
Point of view in criticism, 50; in description, 119, 215; in exposition, 30; in narrative, 170.
Pope, Alexander, 246, 259.
Position of words, 255.
Possessive case, 324.
Post hoc ergo propter hoc, 91.
Posted, 309.
Present tense, 328.
Present use, 286.
Pronouns, possessive of, 323, 325.
PRONUNCIATION, 351 ff.
Proof, 99.
Proportion, 232.
Proposition, 310.
PUNCTUATION, 331 ff.

Quite, 310.
Quotation marks, use of, 339.

Ralegh, Sir W., 268.
Reading, 1.
Reasoning, 85.
Redundancy, 313 ff.
Reference books, 8.
Repetition, effective, 316; ineffective, 315.
Repetition of words, 252, 261.
Reports, 75.
Reputable use, 287.

Restrictive clauses, 335.
Return of the Native, 189.
Rhythm of prose, 263 ff.
"Rise and fall," 267.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 212, 227.
Root, Elihu, 107.
Ruskin, John, 134, 257.

Scott, Sir W., 132, 174, 198.
Semicolon, 333.
Setting, 156, 188.
Shall and *will*, 327.
Shaw, G. B., 183, 187, 230, 231, 252, 258.
Shift of subject, 240.
Should and *would*, 327.
Singsong, 264.
Situation, development of, 154.
Slang, 297.
"Snap the whip," 230.
Some, 311.
Spelling, 341 ff.
Split infinitive, 329.
"Squinting construction," 243.
"Stage directions," 184.
State, 311.
Stephens, James, 252.
Stevenson, R. L., 127, 132, 144, 155, 161, 169, 178, 188, 195, 198, 219, 266.
Structure in theses and reports, 76.
Subject, choice of, 14; for biography, 63; for criticism, 50; for exposition, 28; for narrative, 158.
Subordination, 249, 252, 261.
Surprise in narrative, 202.
Suspense in narrative, 202.
Syllogism, 86.
Synge, J. M., 184, 271.

Taft, W. H., 223.
Tasting books, 9.
Team, 311.
Technical terms in theses, 77.
Temple, Sir W., 267.
Tenses, 328.
Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 192.
Thackeray, W. M., 181, 265, 270.
Theses, 75.
Thompson, W. H., 72.
Three, magic number, 267.
Titles in narrative, 203; punctuation of, 339.
Topic-sentence, 211.
Transitions between paragraphs, 228.
Transpire, 312.
Triteness, 292.

Unity in biography, 69; in description, 119, 121; in exposition, 38; in narrative, 167; in paragraphs, 210 ff.; in sentences, 238 ff.

Vagueness, 289; in description, 136.
Variety in sentences, 260.
Verbs, 321, 326 ff.; in description, 139; redundant, 314.
Vocabulary in criticism, 54.
Vulgarisms, 297.

Weighing books, 10.
Wells, H. G., 176, 201, 225.
Wendell, Barrett, 255.
While, 312.
White, S. E., 221.
White, W. A., 186.
Widecombe, 124.
Wilde, Oscar, 252, 259.
Wilkins (Freeman), Mary, 218.
Wilson, Woodrow, 104.
Words, Choice of, 286 ff.
Words, number of, 313.
Writing rapidly, 3.

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